

Book Reviews

I. PSYCHIATRY

Recent Developments in Schizophrenia. Edited by A. COPPEN and A. WALK. London: Royal Medico-Psychological Association. 1967. Pp. 158. Price 25s.

This is the first of what it is hoped will be a regular series of "Special Publications" in connection with the *British Journal of Psychiatry*. Although sub-titled "A Symposium", it consists of expanded versions of a set of lectures organized by the Royal Medico-Psychological Association and given by well-known British psychiatrists and psychologists. The first article, by Professor Stengel, is on the classification of schizophrenia, and is a clear and critical evaluation of the problem. E. H. Hare writes an excellent review of the epidemiology of schizophrenia; next comes an authoritative contribution by James Shields on the genetics of schizophrenia. G. W. Browne contributes a well-balanced article on the family of the schizophrenic patient. The current biochemical theories are clearly outlined by J. R. Smythies, while Andrew McGhie discusses his own work and other studies on the cognitive disorders in schizophrenia. Social treatment, rehabilitation and management are ably dealt with by J. K. Wing; this is an extremely good paper, which among other things demonstrates what is meant by those much over used words "Social Psychiatry". R. H. Cawley discusses the physical methods of treatment in a clear and concise way, and J. Hoenig contributes an excellent review of the very difficult problem of the prognosis of schizophrenia. The final contribution is by Michael Rutter on "Psychotic Disorders in Early Childhood", which is a very thorough survey of this field.

The striking feature of this book is the well-balanced nature of all the contributions. Views which are not held by the authors are yet presented clearly and without distortion. In the present state of our knowledge a reviewer is bound to find something with which he will disagree. For example one is a little surprised by Dr. Hoenig's statement "For reasons which I do not understand the view is often expressed that Kraepelin defined his nosological entities on the basis of the course of the illness or the prognosis." In fact, in the 5th edition of his textbook Kraepelin grouped together dementia praecox, dementia paranoides and catatonia as "processes of deterioration" because they all led to a "peculiar kind of psychological defect".

Points such as this are, of course, of minor importance. This book is an excellent summary of our knowledge of many different aspects of schizophrenia, and can be recommended without hesitation to psychiatrists and psychologists who are interested in this illness.

FRANK FISH.

Psychiatry in the Practice of Medicine. By ALLEN J. ENELOW and MURRAY WEXLER. New York: Oxford University Press. 1966. Pp. 355. Price 52s.

The dust cover of this book suggests that it is not for psychiatrists but has been written primarily for physicians. We are told that the authors have for a number of years conducted courses designed to educate and train practising physicians in psychiatric principles and techniques. It is furthermore suggested that the book may also be of use to social workers, clinical psychologists, medical students, non-psychiatric interns, etc. Be this as it may, it is an uneven book. Its opening chapters are often wordy and cry out for rewriting in a more compact style. There is a liberal sprinkling of what some might consider to be psychiatric platitudes about the integration of psychiatry and general medicine which, while they may still have a certain amount of appeal when uttered on an appropriate platform, make rather tedious reading.

After a somewhat uncertain start, things improve, however, both stylistically and in terms of the interest of the material, particularly in the examination of the structure and development of the medical interview. The same applies to a later chapter on "process-oriented psychotherapy" in which interpersonal relationships are the main focus of interest, using methods of evocation and confrontation which owe much to Harry Stack Sullivan. From the point of view of psychiatrists-in-training at registrar level these are the most valuable parts of the book and can be read with profit.

There are also chapters on psychiatric diagnosis, psychopharmacology, psychiatric emergencies and contemporary psychotherapies.

One or two criticisms in detail can be made. Many might hesitate to make a diagnosis of Korsakov's syndrome in the absence of disorientation, though we are told that this "is not present in all cases". Similarly

is it accurate to say that exhibitionists are, apart from their sexual perversity, "quite law-abiding"? Much turns on the meaning of the word "quite". Then again, most British psychiatrists would consider a daily dose of 75-100 mg. of amitriptyline or imipramine in the treatment of depression as being on the low side. But these are minor matters, and on balance credits certainly outweigh debits. At the same time the book's likely overall appeal is difficult to judge; it may easily fall between two stools.

W. H. TRETOWAN.

Research on Genetics in Psychiatry: Report of a WHO Scientific Group. Geneva: World Health Organization Technical Report Series, 346. 1966. Pp. 20. Price 3s. 6d.

In November, 1965, an international group of experts and their advisers, ten in all, met in Geneva to discuss the present position of research in psychiatric genetics. Professor Inouye of Tokyo was chairman of the group, and Dr. Kay of Newcastle upon Tyne was the rapporteur. This pamphlet, which summarizes the results of their deliberations, takes stock of our present knowledge and expresses the hopes of the participants for the future.

One detects the influence of Dr. Seymour Kety in the comments on the relative unfruitfulness of previous biochemical investigations in the major psychoses, and the hopes now set instead on the long-term follow-up of high-risk groups to throw light on the nature of genetic and environmental interaction. The influence of Dr. Newton Morton can be seen in the optimistic prediction that major genes in mental disorders will be identified which will leave only a small residue to be explained by the methods of quantitative genetic analysis to which other experts have been turning. It is suggested that the search for recessive genes might profitably be made in communities, such as Hawaii, in which there is a high degree of racial admixture, and in isolated communities with a high degree of inbreeding, while they still exist. One sees the hand of the Scandinavian members of the group in the recommendation that in future twin series should be drawn directly from birth registers, though insistence on such a procedure would severely limit the countries in which twin studies could at present be made.

The role of chromosomal abnormalities is succinctly reviewed. There is mention of tissue culture experiments; and hopes are raised of the possibility of identifying genetic factors in the metabolism of drugs. The need for some standardization of psychiatric diagnosis is stressed, provided this is not overzealous, and mention is made of the contribution psychiatric

genetics might make to classification. The reader can form a good idea of the variety of topics with which those interested in genetics and psychiatry are concerned. However there are no bibliographical references.

The recommendations of the group relate to projects where the scarcity of suitable cases seems to call for interdisciplinary research on an international scale. They include the investigation of special classes of monozygotic twins such as those separated early in life and those discordant for mental disorder.

JAMES SHIELDS.

An Anthropological Physiology of Schizophrenia and its Sociofamilial Context. By LEON I. JACOBS. New York: Vantage Press. 1966. Pp. 96. Price \$2.75.

As the title indicates, this is an essay in the integration of findings related to the aetiology of schizophrenia from research in diverse fields, psychoanalysis, anthropology, neuro-physiology, biochemistry, sociology and psychology. It appears to be written for advanced students in medicine or psychiatry. It provides brief and somewhat sketchy reviews of current work (up to 1965) in the various fields. Too little is said of the assumptions and strategies of research for the reviews to have lasting value, and they will soon be out of date.

For the present they are stimulating; the author's readers will find enough to disagree with, to wish that he had developed his arguments more fully. He makes a point, for instance, that schizophrenia is specifically a "human phenomenon" and that man is liable to it because of a special kind of dependency period. May one not regard as essentially schizophrenic some of the disorders to which primates are liable when brought up in the peculiar conditions of laboratory life?

D. RUSSELL DAVIS.

2. PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

The Politics of Experience and the Bird of Paradise. By R. D. LAING. London: Penguin Books. 1967. Pp. 156. Price 4s. 6d.

Existential psychiatry has not to any great extent altered the predominantly organic-constitutional, social or psychoanalytic orientations of Anglo-American psychiatrists. In para-psychiatric circles, however, Laing's writings have been influential, and this book consists of an integrated series of his papers. It seems reasonable to see how far his concepts are relevant to the practising psychiatrist.