chemical fields, and the functions of feedback—would have been wholly beneficial, since nothing in the main part of the book rests on whether they are meaningful or true. The other digressions into borderline subjects seem to me well judged. Observations in ethology are mentioned in the contexts where it is customary to suppose them to be relevant, but little space is wasted on them. Dr. Miller seems to hold the commonsense view that human behaviour can be better studied in man than in monkeys. Abnormal psychology is mentioned here and there in illustration, but not overstressed. Observations made by the techniques of experimental psychology contribute very little to the text, but I think good justification for this apparent neglect can be found.

Apart from all digressions, there remain nearly 300 pages that describe and discuss normal—that is, non-psychotic—human behaviour, and these escape remarkably well the danger of anecdotalism. This they do partly by their orderly arrangement, and partly by the skeleton of theory to which the facts, generalizations, and illustrative case-histories are attached. The theory is eclectic. It owes a good deal—as does the selection of facts and manner of their presentation—to Freudian psychoanalysis, but neither accepts all psycho-analytical ideas nor neglects others. It never outrages common sense; on the other hand it is not often so platitudinous as to be annoying. Dr. Miller rarely attempts to argue about theoretical assertions. Those with which he agrees, he merely states. In a few places he mentions one with which he disagrees, and then he always gives good reasons for disagreeing.

G. S. BRINDLEY


The name of the author of this volume is associated with an eponymous 'depression inventory' which was developed to undertake a small group of American studies some years ago. A detailed account of this inventory and the research connected with it—all of which have appeared elsewhere—make up the middle section under the title of 'A Systematic Investigation of Depression'. It is flanked by partial and not very authoritative reviews of the clinical, experimental, theoretical, and therapeutic aspects of depression. The book was published in the United States by Harper and Row in 1967 and is now published, apparently unchanged, in Great Britain two years later. It is difficult to know why.


This is an excellent textbook of psychopharmacology that should prove most useful for clinical psychiatrists, to whom it is directed.

The main section (Part II) consists of a systematic review of the large number of drugs used in psychiatry, with a brief account of what is known of their mechanism of action, their metabolism, and their behavioural studies. This is followed by a detailed account of their clinical usage.

Part I of the book consists of a general review of the methodology of human and clinical psychopharmacology with much useful information about drug trials, rating scales, and placebo problems.

There is a shorter section on animal matters and a useful chapter on legal and ethical considerations. The last chapter and the appendix give a guide to the use of the drugs in particular diseases.

The book is accurate and the writing clear and succinct. It can be unhesitatingly recommended for psychiatrists, general practitioners, and medical students. It should also prove helpful for pharmacologists and psychologists who wish to gain an overall grasp of a most complex subject, and to appreciate 'the many problems existing at the interface between research and clinical application of the results of research' as Dr. Lehmann says in his introduction.

J. R. SMYTHIES

THE PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY OF THE NORMAL HUMAN


It is difficult to present an overall opinion on this expensive volume, the main feature of which is the diversity of presentation and contents. It ranges from a largely philosophical discussion on the nature of normality to a detailed comment on the quantitation of EEG records. This approach is justified in the preface as 'providing a sampling of some of the types of research underway', but in the absence of a real attempt to edit the material and to provide a clear central theme, it seems more appropriate for a journal than a single volume. Individual contributions, however, will be of value to the specialist reader—for example, the comprehensive review of the effect of anti-anxiety tranquilizers and the group of articles describing the effect of amphetamines in the normal subject.

GEORGE W. ASHCROFT

NOTICES

2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PSYCHOSURGERY

This will take place in Copenhagen, 24-26 August 1970. The main theme will be: selection of patients, surgical techniques, and results. The number of participants will be limited and applications should be received before 28 February 1970, preferably indicating the theme chosen for presentation of a possible paper. Applications to Mr. E. R. Hitchcock, Department of Surgical Neurology, Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, Scotland, or Dr. K. Vaernet, Department of Neurosurgery, Rigshospitalet, 2200 Copenhagen N., Denmark.

FEDERATION OF WESTERN SOCIETIES OF NEUROLOGICAL SCIENCE

The next meeting will be held in Phoenix, Arizona, U.S.A. on 5-8 March, 1970. Details may be obtained from the Secretary Treasurer: Dr. Charles W. Elkins, 601 N. Wilmot Rd., Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A.
Book Reviews

J. R. Smythies

J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry 1969 32: 642
doi: 10.1136/jnnp.32.6.642

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