On the whole, these meetings provide a useful summary of work in many parts of the world, and a sensible clinical orientation is emphasized throughout. The continued success of the practical exercise in international scientific collaboration at Salzburg is welcome, and reflects much credit on the industry and enthusiasm of the organizers.

W. ROSS RUSSELL

A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK OF PSYCHIATRY Edited by J. R. Novello. (Pp. 621; illustrated; £8.38.)


Printed in very large type and intended for psychiatrists as an 'immediate source of sound, practical information for use on the firing line' this bulky volume has been written by 19 authors, most of whom are residents or teachers in psychiatry at the University of Michigan Medical School. From a British reader's viewpoint it seems a strange hotchpotch, remarkable for its uncritically psycho-dynamic emphasis and for its paucity of information about psychiatric illness or research. The longest of its three parts, concerned with evaluation and some aspects of psychotherapeutic and physical treatment, consists largely of tabulated recommendations. In the chapter on general psychiatric evaluation, history-taking and examination receive a quarter of the space allocated to psychoanalytical assessment and characterization of ego function. Nine words relate to assessment of mood-state in the former section but 31 ego defenses are described in the latter. In other chapters, evaluation of drug abuse, sexual dysfunction, assessment for psychotherapy, and for transgender and cosmetic surgery are among topics which receive relatively detailed attention. Eleven systems of marital therapy are outlined. Some simple tables of differential diagnosis are included but mention of many psychiatric syndromes is limited to an abbreviated table derived from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM II).

The second part of the book concerns postgraduate education and lists training programmes, books popular with residents, and 100 'Journals and Periodicals of Interest to Psychiatrists'. The latter omits this journal and all journals of general medicine. The British Journal of Psychiatry is listed as a quarterly. Advice on preparing for board examinations includes the statement that for part I journal reading is not especially important 'and may be harmful'. The final section of 100 pages lists addresses of psychiatric organizations, hospitals, and residencies.

If, on his firing line, the reader consults the index for adaptive regression, bad trip, collaborative dyadic therapy, daytop village, escape precautions, fantasy, goosflesh, or holistic, help will be at hand. But if he searches for the following he will find himself unaided: anorexia nervosa, bereavement, (cerebral) tumour or neoplasm, epidemiology, dyskinesia, frontal lobe, Ganser's syndrome, genetics, head injury.


The scope of these volumes, the first of which appeared in 1970, has naturally increased enormously with the growing knowledge of mental handicap in its widest sense. Following an introduction by Wortis, are three chapters on clinical aspects (Kirmans), genetics and intelligence (Anderson), and hydrocephaly (Dignan and Warkany). Developmental biochemistry is discussed by Himwich and Agrawal.

A knowledgeable survey is provided of the work undertaken in each type of section and a comprehensive list of references is given. The chapter on sociology is less well presented, being at times difficult to follow, but this is compensated for by an excellent paper on physical education (with 128 references) which would be worth reprinting for every mental hospital. A chapter on language is controversial, and shows a lack of awareness of British work.

On the whole, this book is probably of more value to the reader who is already fairly well versed in mental retardation, than to those with little, or no, knowledge of this field. However, both types of reader should find it a useful reference book, and the editor is to be congratulated on the contents of his latest volume, which can be well recommended.

RONALD C. MACGILLIVRAY


This book, the second edition of an already well-established and highly respected textbook, needs no introduction to those engaged in the field of neurophysiology. It is considered invaluable to both technicians and clinical electroencephalographers. The text, punctuated with numerous illustrations, covers concisely all current aspects of the origin, amplification and recording techniques of the electrical activity of the brain in particular, but with special reference to other physiological signals. The chapter on methods of EEG signal analysis has been extensively revised in this edition, and presents a practical review of this complex subject.

ANNE P. MCGEORGE