

generally good, and James Smith produces a very good review of recent advances in microsurgery, and this is augmented by Millesi's article on free nerve grafts. In the face of acknowledged poor results in peripheral nerve surgery, the extra care and apposition which results from microsurgery offers the best hope for improvement, although, as many of these authors point out, it will be some years yet before the results can be properly assessed and compared.

CAMPBELL SEMPLE

THE BIOFEEDBACK SYLLABUS: A HANDBOOK FOR THE PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGIC STUDY OF BIOFEEDBACK
 Edited by Barbara B. Brown. (Pp. 495; illustrated; \$26.50 cloth, \$19.75 paper.) Thomas: Springfield, Ill. 1975.

The title of this book does not immediately convey what it contains, for though the word 'syllabus' can be used in this way it is a little unusual. In fact the volume is a collection of abstracts on biofeedback, its physiological background, methodology and techniques. The field is rapidly expanding and the aim here is to provide a critical evaluation of the literature for researchers, clinicians, teachers and students. Certainly the researchers are well served but whether other groups are likewise helped by the book is less certain. There are sections on electrodermal activity, heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle systems. EEG, and in particular alpha feedback, is covered adequately but there is a more comprehensive companion volume *The Alpha Syllabus*. On the whole there are few references later than 1973, and the use of biofeedback techniques in treatment is scantily covered. The abstracts themselves are adequate but of necessity brief. The volume, therefore, provides an entry point into the literature obtained at a considerable price even in the paperback version of the book.

D. F. SCOTT

THE FAMILY Edited by H. Hirsch. (Pp. 566; illustrated; Sw.Fr. 176.) Karger: Basel. 1975.

This large and very expensive book reprints all the papers delivered at the 4th International Congress of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynaecology, held in Tel Aviv in late 1974. No doubt all of the speakers enjoyed their visit to the Holy Land, but by no means all of them said anything worth recording for posterity. And some of what was said had nothing to do with the family. There are, of course, some interesting and thoughtful papers, but the majority are ephemeral.

In an age of increasing costs and decreasing resources, surely the publication of complete conference proceedings is unnecessary and anachronistic.

Who could feel justified in spending more than £30 on such a book?

J. L. GIBBONS

PSYCHIATRY FOR STUDENTS Vol. 1. By David Stafford-Clark. (Pp. 225; £2.65.) Allen and Unwin: London. 1974.

The new edition of this basic textbook for medical students is a well set out and very readable book, covering the subject with enough thoroughness to stimulate an interest in psychiatry without giving too much detail which might confuse the student. Case histories provide a valuable addition not normally present in textbooks of this size, and, although at times they may take up a little too much of the text, they are particularly useful for students with limited clinical experience. Most chapters dealing with individual syndromes are clearly written, and the description of schizophrenia includes information about chronic patients often not available in other basic texts. The chapter on psychiatric emergencies is also useful, particularly for those who are not destined to be career psychiatrists, but will nevertheless be faced with acute psychiatric problems.

Although the chapter on treatment covers the subject adequately, a little more detail could have been given in those concerned with specific disorders. The book is open to criticism on the grounds that classification of certain disorders is rather idiosyncratic. For example, failure of development, a category not included in the ICD, is held to include dementia, personality disorders, sexual perversions, and addiction to drugs and alcohol. There is also a tendency, as in other single author books, to express the personal views of the author rather than those more generally held, an example being found in the section about psychiatric indications for termination of pregnancy.

Overall this is a useful and readable textbook for students and is not over-priced.

SUSAN WHYTE

TREATMENT SETTINGS IN PSYCHIATRY By J. B. Copas, M. Fryer, and R. Ashley. (Pp. 104; illustrated; £2.25.) Kimpton: London. 1974.

This is a well-written and readable book although the subject matter is rather limited. The text consists of a report on the results of a research project in which a general hospital unit at Rochford and a mental hospital at Runwell were compared. The main criticism is that the data could have been adequately presented as an article in a journal and, in my opinion, is insufficient to warrant a separate textbook.

The introductory chapters include some irrelevant material and are rather fragmented. A more detailed account of the history and services in the area con-