competitors. Students should not be expected to buy a separate book on this subject. Likewise, at £8.50 it occupies a position at the costlier end of the paperback market.

B TOONE

Psychiatric Presentations of Medical Illness: Somatopsychic Disorders Edited by Richard CW Hall (pp 406; £18.95) Lancaster: MTP Press Ltd, 1981.

In this book, Richard Hall has assembled a group of writers to present the various psychiatric manifestations of a large number of medical illnesses. As professor of both medicine and psychiatry he would seem to be an admirable person to do this, collating information which has largely evolved from the rapid expansion of psychiatric liaison services over the past three decades. There are four sections to the book. In the first, a brief overview for the setting of the rest of the book is given, which is followed by discussion of particular psychiatric symptoms, such as depression, anxiety and hallucinations, which are frequently noted to be associated with somatic disorders. The third section covers the psychiatric presentations of specific disorders, including infectious diseases, endocrine dysfunction, cardiovascular, pulmonary and gastrointestinal diseases, haematological disorders, seizure disorders, and disturbances related to fluid and electrolyte imbalance and heavy metal intoxication. The final section reviews psychiatric symptomatology induced by drugs, including psychotropic drugs.

Overall, the book is a mine of references, and many of the chapters provide extremely useful and up-to-date reviews that a number of physicians, including psychiatrists, will call on for information. Not only is the commonplace discussed, but the interested can find information on psychiatric aspects of hypophosphataemia, Menkes' kinky-hair disease, and the rare but interesting Manganic madness. A difficulty with this sort of book is that, for example, the symptoms of depression are repeated in several different chapters, and some aggressive editing could have shortened the overall size without loss of content. The most useful section is undoubtedly the third, and the value of the last

section on drugs is diminished since the large appendix listing many drugs and their psychiatric side effects is without references, and in many cases only gives overall generalisations about complications that are useless.

The reason why this book should be on every psychiatrist's desk is clearly laid out by the editor in Chapter 1. According to his review of the literature, 66% of psychiatrists do not perform physical examinations, and only 32% feel competent to perform them. This book testifies to the high incidence of medical disorders that lead to psychopathology, and even if not encouraged to read its contents, on seeing its cover in front of them the psychiatrist may be reminded that primarily he is a physician and that he ignores this fact at his peril.

MICHAEL TRIMBLE

Progress in Multiple Sclerosis Research

Edited by HJ Bauer, S. Poser and G Ritter (pp 677; DM79, US\$46.70. Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1980.

This compendium of 103 papers represents the contributions of the International Federation of Multiple Sclerosis Societies to a symposium held in Gottingen in 1978. It should be read backwards starting with the concluding remarks by Bauer who helpfully summarises each contribution in about two sentences. Work on experimental allergic encephalomyelitis is kept going by interest in the chronic relapsing form of the disease which does not seem to be caused by myelin basic protein but by some other, as yet unidentified antigen. The relationship between such immune mediated inflammation and viral infection is discussed with respect to the demyelination caused by virus induced destruction of oligodendrocytes infected by mouse hepatitis virus. New techniques for detecting viral genomic information are being brought to bear in the search for the cause of multiple sclerosis but still show no real signs of reward. The oligoclonal bands of IgG in the cerebrospinal fluid continue to provide a diagnostic aid and to fascinate research workers who, however, have not yet discovered the antigens against which these presumed antibodies are directed. It seems increasingly likely that they

represent the products of non-specifically activated plasma cells or lymphocytes which have become segregated in the central nervous system compartment. Lack of understanding of the aetiology of multiple sclerosis has not deterred clinicians from trying out various means of manipulating the immune response. Reports of prolonged azathioprine treatment, unfortunately not always well controlled, suggest reduction in relapse rate and rate of progression of disease, particularly in younger patients with shorter duration of disease. These and other matters are brought together in a single, beautifully presented and, by current standards, reasonably priced volume. Although, most, perhaps all, the worthwhile information has already been published elsewhere the research worker will find this an essential volume for his library bookshelf and many neurologists will want to study the evidence about immunosuppressive treatment themselves.

RAC HUGHES

Paediatric Neuromuscular Diseases

KF Swaiman and FS Wright (pp 283; £27.00) London: CV Mosby Co, 1979.

The authors of this book, who have already produced a major textbook of paediatric neurology, have recognised the real need for a comprehensive conventional style of textbook in the limited field of children's neuromuscular disorders. They have amassed a good deal of information, on the very numerous disorders of nerve and muscle which may affect children, and have prefaced it with over 40 pages on physiology, examination techniques and investigations. Few disorders are omitted but they do not grapple with controversial problems (for example of nosology or management) in a way that will give helpful guidance or stimulation and the whole atmosphere of the book suggests professional authorship rather than specialised clinical experience. The authors have not grasped the crucial importance of genetic counselling in the inherited neuromuscular disorders and their comments are often so vague, irrelevant or inaccurate as to make the book positively dangerous if it is used for guidance in this area. Otherwise, it is a useful if unexciting compilation.

D GARDNER-MEDWILL