Book reviews

Current Developments in Psychopharmacology. Vol 6. Edited by Walter B Essman and L Valzelli. (Pp 226; £29.50.) Lancaster: MTP Press Ltd, 1981.

This would appear to be the last volume of the series of books of this title. Like previous volumes it contains review monographs on a variety of different aspects of psychopharmacology. The contents of the present volume are diverse to say the least. They deal with the actions of psycho-active drugs on the nervous system and behaviour of non-mammalian species, genetic aspects of behavioural response to opiates, actions of anticonvulsant drugs on behaviour and cognitive ability, tardive dyskinesia, nicotine and smoking, antidepressant actions of lithium, and circadian fluctuations in the effect of neuroleptic agents. As such the volume is unlikely to be of specific interest to any one group. From my own interests I found the chapter by Dr Trimble to be an interesting compilation of the literature available on the relationship between anticonvulsant drugs and disturbances of behaviour and cognitive ability. It is clear that this is an area where a great deal of further research is needed. The chapter by Dr Itoh on tardive dyskinesia induced by neuroleptic drugs provides an insight into the approach to this disorder being carried out in Japan. It is only one of a number of available reviews of this area and as such is not the most detailed or explicit. Dr Kumar and Professor Lader provide a critical review of the pharmacology of nicotine in the central nervous system and behavioural effects produced in animals together with the role played by nicotine in smoking behaviour in man and in the reinforcing properties of nicotine on smoking.

This is an interesting and timely addition to the literature in this field. Dr Nagavama and colleagues present a fascinating insight into circadian fluctuations in the effects of neuroleptic drugs. The pattern of circadian variation appears to vary with the drug employed and the dosage utilised. It appears that it is some change in the sensitivity of the brain to the drug rather than any alteration in drug concentration which is the important factor in determining circadian variation. Overall, a very mixed book containing a variety of chapters on very different topics. It is unlikely to find application as a standard text or indeed as a reference book. It will no doubt be bought by those who have the previous five vol-

umes in this series and appears primarily aimed at libraries. £29.50, in my opinion, is expensive and I would not personally buy this volume.

PG JENNER

Medicine and Psychiatry: A Practical Approach. Edited by Francis H Creed and Jeremy M Pfeffer. (Pp 474; £35.00.) London: Pitman Books Limited, 1982.

There can be no doubt about the invasion of psychiatrists into the general hospital over the past few decades. The growth of so-called "liaison psychiatry", mainly in the United States, is encouraged in this country by the current policy of the DHSS to integrate psychiatric services and general medical services in the setting, for example, of psychiatric units in district general hospitals. Psychiatrists have started to eat lunch with their colleagues, leading not only hopefully to an acceptance that they have similar table manners and can therefore eat together, but also to the planning of such books as this.

The editors, both consultant psychiatrists, have brought together physicians from a variety of fields to write chapters in association with psychiatric colleagues emphasising in particular the common language between them. Although the bias is towards physicians from the London hospitals, outsiders have also been included, the most notable perhaps being Professor Lipowski from Dartmouth, USA.

The book is divided into two halves. The first includes general principles and covers such topics as the history of liaison psychiatry, the relationship between physical and psychiatric symptoms, the essence of the consultation process itself, cultural problems and some of the important aspects of teaching psychiatry as part of medicine. In the second part, special topics are considered. Broadly, most of the symptoms in medicine are covered by a single chapter, and a specialist physician has co-written a chapter with an interested psychiatrist. We therefore see chapters on obstetrics and gynaecology, neurology, diseases of the chest, cardiovascular problems, gastro-intestinal diseases, dentistry, renal problems, endocrine disorders, pain and rheumatology and dermatology. In addition to these, some special topics such as sexual problems in the general hospital, setting up a service for mastectomy patients, and dealing with alcoholic and geriatric patients are also included. It is encouraging to see that the authors have

also invited a chapter from a psychologist and a social worker, but a notable omission is a contribution from a nurse with particular reference to the role of the liaison nurse.

The book itself reaches a fairly substantial size with 28 chapters, but it has been well orchestrated by the editors and the final result is that it makes satisfactory reading and also provides a useful reference book for those working in a liaison setting.

Unfortunately, although the publishers have produced a nice volume, the price is likely to prohibit those who would most like to purchase this book from actually doing so. This seems such a common comment in book reviews today. Hopefully, if it is made loud and long enough, publishers will come to realise, as the Arabs have had to do with the price of oil, that the price of books is dictated by the market place. If they are not selling enough, if is not through lack of good writers but through unrealistic pricing of the final product.

MICHAEL TRIMBLE

Basic Neuroradiology. By Mohammad Sarwar, Behrooz Azar-Kia and Solomon Barnitzky. (Pp 845; \$95.00) St. Louis: Warren H. Green, 1983.

Basic Neuroradiology is described by the authors as medium sized but contains 15 chapters and 838 pages. Each chapter covers a single subject and compares in concise but adequate detail pathological changes in CT and, where appropriate, in conventional procedures. The authors have commenced with a chapter on the normal and abnormal plain skull and have used frequent easily understood tables and lists. There is a detailed description of normal vascular anatomy which although it provides a useful reference is perhaps in more detail than necessary. This would not matter if the chapters on the Ear, Para-nasal regions, Larynx and Orbit were not so limited in coverage. This latter chapter is only 40 pages long compared with over 100 for the normal arterial anatomy and 38 for the normal venous anatomy.

Tumours are considered according to the site of the mass and its effect on normal structures on CT and angiography and secondly according to specific pathological processes.

The book is liberally illustrated and the CT scan and subtraction angiograms are of quite adequate quality. I wish I could say the same for the radiographs, some of