Book reviews

and include those who have added importantly to knowledge about monoamine oxidase (MAO) and its subtypes MAO A and B, to the discovery of their presence in the human brain and to the development of relatively selective inhibitors of MAO A and B.

The text is divided into three sections. The first, "Basic Aspects of MAO and its Selective Inhibitors" is perhaps the best. The chemical structural requirements for selectivity of MAO inhibitors are defined and conditions *in vitro* and *in vivo* for ensuring selectivity are examined. As yet, selectivity of the inhibitors is far from absolute and experiments are detailed in which effects of substrates of MAO A or B are enhanced more by inhibition of both enzymes than by either alone; the reverse of the coin, that is the limited substrate specificity of MAO A or B is also considered, a substantial amount of 5-HT (MAO A substrate) deamination being handled by MAO B *in vivo*. Inhibition of brain MAO A appears to be more crucial to antidepressant effect than MAO B, with the correlate that chronic treatment of rats with an MAO A but not an MAO B inhibitor, results in down-regulation of β -adrenoceptors and cyclic AMP responses to noradrenaline in cerebral cortex. The therapeutic importance of reversible selective MAO inhibitors is considered since these tend to have less tyramine potentiating properties than non-selective MAO inhibitors, an important additional aspect being their equi-effectiveness on brain and liver MAO compared to irreversible MAO inhibitors, more potent on liver than brain MAO. The clinical relevance of this is the smaller potential for the "cheese" effect complicating therapy. The recently discovered endogenous urinary monoamine oxidase is discussed together with the evidence that excretion varies in a number of physiological and pathological states. The virtue of deprenyl, an MAO B inhibitor, as an aphrodisiac in jaded or faded male rats are extolled, the context being that long-term administration of small doses of deprenyl may improve the quality of life in senescence.

The two other sections, "Selective and Nonselective MAO inhibitors in Therapy" and "Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors in Psychiatric Research" are of more variable quality. The basic and clinical data concerning tranylcypromine stereoisomers are discussed as well as the discrepant findings as to their value as antidepressants. The role of deprenyl in the treatment of Parkinson's disorder is also assessed. The limita-

tions of use of platelets for predicting psychiatric disorder or psychopathology are well considered as are the methodological problems involved in platelet preparations. There are minor inaccuracies. For example, while adverse interactions between MAO inhibitors and amitriptyline hardly ever occur it is incorrect to state none have been reported.

Those involved in amine oxidase research are bound to have the volume on their shelves. The book is well-presented, informative and can be recommended to clinicians and research scientists.

E MARLEY

Theory in Psychopharmacology. Vol 1
Edited by SJ Cooper (£19.50) London:
Academic Press Inc. 1981.

This first volume of what promises to be an extremely valuable series contributes authoritative and thought-provoking discussion of neurochemical and pharmacological influences in a wide range of animal behaviours, including social interaction, learning, aversion, reward and habituation. The outstanding quality of this book is the provision by each author not only of a substantial review of these areas, but of a critical appraisal of methodological problems and interpretation of animal behaviour. Particularly revealing chapters in this respect are those by File and Blundell who discuss some basic problems with common experimental protocols. This self-analytical approach exposes the naive reader to some of the pitfalls encountered in the interpretation of complex behaviours, which once revealed, seem disarmingly obvious. In contrast, some other chapters, such as those by Panksepp and Margulies which deal with brain opioids and the social integration of behaviour, are more speculative but equally enjoyable to read. The enthusiasm, level of discussion and depth of literature reviewed make the whole book a pleasure to read. If subsequent volumes continue in this spirit, the series will be a major contribution to psychopharmacology.

NMJ RUPNIAK

Genetics in Neurology. By Victor Ionasescu, Hans Zellweger. (Pp 520; \$73.50) New York: Raven Press, 1983.

This is a good book. It must therefore be disheartening for the authors to find that the publishers are asking 73 dollars for it.

Inevitably this is a book for the library (if they can afford it) and not for the individual neurologist or geneticist. The book has a strong biochemical bias with extensive chapters on the mucopolysaccharidoses, glycogenoses and other inborn errors of metabolism. These are well referenced and are more than sufficient for the clinician. The same is true for the chapters on epilepsy, basal ganglia disease and muscle disease. Rarities are not dealt with.

There are some areas in neurogenetics which present great difficulty. These include the hereditary ataxias, the neuropathies and the many eponymous syndromes of which those of Ramsay Hunt and Roussy-Levy are but two. Not all of these problems are resolved, but in general the clinician will feel well informed by experienced practitioners.

The reviewer tested the book at an average genetic clinic. The section on myotonic dystrophy was unhelpful on how to counsel potential gene carriers, but the coverage on a similar problem in tuberous sclerosis was instructive. In anticipation of a question on the biochemistry of Huntington's chorea, the reviewer found the summary of the pathochemistry most helpful but there was no information on how to advise a patient with a family history of multiple sclerosis in two generations.

Finally a rapid check on the risks to offspring of a single person with hereditary motor and sensory neuropathy, type II, was reassuring. It was in the end, despite minor omissions, exceedingly comforting to have had the book close at hand and the library should be persuaded to buy it.

M BARAITSER

The Clinical Management of Alcoholism. By Sheldon Zimberg. (Pp 264; \$41.00) New York: Brunner/Mazel Inc—Distrib: Raven Press, 1983.

Many of us grew up in a generation which was not taught much about the recognition and treatment of drinking problems, only to find over recent years that excessive drinking seems commonly and deviously to enter into our daily clinical work. For anyone wanting to repair previous gaps in education Zimberg provides a useful but not a complete answer.

Sections deal with such issues as diagnosis, the clinical interview, management of psychiatric and neurological complications, and varieties of approach to treatment. There are comprehensive references and a good index.