consideration of the heterogeneity of pain mechanisms, details of pain treatments and the problems arising directly as a result of analgesia. This is an excellent chapter, full of useful practical advice. The enigma of reflex sympathetic dystrophy is discussed by Rizzi and co-authors. The usual difficulties of definition and terminology quickly emerge, and this probably has some bearing on the surprisingly good short and long term results of treatment in their patients. In a stimulating chapter, Benedetti and Bonica draw attention to the magnitude of the cancer pain problem. Pagni reviews the numerous neurosurgical procedures for cancer pain, discussing older as well as newer operations. Only ablative procedures are considered, thalamotomy receiving a relatively brief review. It is a pity that deep brain stimulation is not considered, either here or in any other chapter; most neurosurgeons concerned with pain relief are coming to the view that in general, stimulation has more to offer than ablation, with a lower morbidity. However, results of ablation or stimulation remain unpredictable and analgesia is often disappointingly short lived. Another cause for concern is the vastly different success rates obtained by different surgeons for any particular operation. Of the two chapters on pituitary ablation, Gianasi presents the more detailed review of Moricca’s technique for pain relief in advanced widespread cancer.

There is much of interest and practical value in this book. However, it is over inclusive of topics not directly relevant to pain management which are adequately covered both in this series of books and in other easily accessible sources.

JW SCADDING


This, to quote the jacket cover, is “a provocative book for the general reader and psychologist and is indispensable reading for phobia sufferers and their friends and families”. When I read this I usually shudder as it is impossible to cater simultaneously for patients, their therapists and the general reader. My doubts were intensified after reading the first chapter on the “territory of fear” that tells us that “a panic attack is an intense burst of anxiety accompanied by marked physiological upsurge” and that “common fears are a biological implant aimed at protecting the young against possible injury”. The next chapter dwells at length on cardiac aspects of the panic attack and includes a frightening picture of the heart to illustrate mitral valve prolapse, which in America is still felt to be closely related to panic disorder. The poor patient who thinks he might be suffering from panic will then have it confirmed when he reads that his chance of death from heart disease and stroke is double that of ordinary people. After this dramatic introduction, which no doubt would be described as flooding by the behavioural psychologist, the reader will be tempted to close the book in fright.

This will be a pity, because although Dr Agras continues to make simple things complicated—“certain classes of visual and auditory events activate a biologically endowed learning mechanism”—he does give a comprehensive and useful account of present thinking about phobias, obsessions, panic and their pharmacological and psychological treatments. I had to admire him for the courage with which he tackled subjects that would tax the most illuminating of teachers. We move from a detailed discussion of the phobias of Little Hans to the behavioural theories of JB Watson, and then to a simplified account of brain neurochemistry and neurotransmitters. We are treated to a discussion of Gray’s septo-hippocampal theory of anxiety and an account of benzodiazepine receptors (in which the analogy of space capsules docking at a satellite is used to explain the specificity of receptors). The reader is then whisked away to current treatments for phobias and panic in which the transition from psychodynamic to behavioural and medical treatments are made felicitously without any apparent inconsistency.

The text is enlivened by some clever cartoons illustrating the most germane points. The artist is not acknowledged and may well be related to Professor Agras himself.

In summary this book fails to live up to its impossible expectations but nonetheless gives a comprehensive and fair account of the nature and treatments of this group of often disabling conditions. It will make admirable reading for a patient who is grounded in the basic biological sciences and will also be useful reading for students of both sociology and psychiatry. I am still bothered about the first two chapters; I hope that they do not lead to a new condition: agrophobia.

PETER TYLER


This new book on headache is introduced by a preface written by Frederigo Sicuret which is lavish in personal praise of its authors from the Pavia school in Italy. Alessandro Agnoli follows with a foreword: “flowery but quite enchanting prose but concludes: ‘the headache sufferer will continue...
to be just that, with ever greater rejection of
drugs and a preference for alternative medi-
cine." The essence of this work of just over
100 pages is carried in three chapters on mi-
graine, cluster headache and "daily chronic head-
ache". These chapters follow the usual pattern of past well-established works, de-
scribing clinical features and a variety of pe-
pharmacological and biochemical research.
They reflect much of the admirable work of the
Italian school, leaning heavily on the at-
tempts to classify headache by prolactin re-
sponses, by endorphin deficiencies in the CSF
and by the therapeutic response to trypt-
tophan. In a small book a comprehensive re-
view of the literature is impossible, but
though many good papers are cited here, there
are some serious omissions if this is to
be used as a primary source of reference.

Taxonomy, the attempt to order or clas-
sify the headache syndromes is a major pre-
occupation. Previous classifications are
justly criticised, but the attempt to divide the
clinical groups on the basis of "neu-
roendocrine" tests, though admirable in con-
ception, will predictably fail the clinician.
Existing clinical terms are at times confused;
the authors use prodrôme when many of us
would use aura, and the real prodromal
phase of mood and vegetative symptoms is
not distinguished. "Daily Chronic Head-
ache" is substituted for tension or muscle
contraction headache, and this is a fair de-
scription if the term is deliberately widened
to include traumatic head pain and pains
referred from the cervical spine. Post-
traumatic headache is considered at greater
length than tension headache, and a slightly
pretentious "neuroendocrine approach" is
submitted, though curiously, there is little
importance or emphasis placed on factitious
pain, malinger or hysterical conversion.

I found the book easy to read, and the
publishers are congratulated on an attractive
format, liberally illustrated with tables and
graphs set on a yellow background. Some of
these bear a typeset far too small, but most
are of pleasing appearance and complement
the text.

I enjoyed this book and would recom-
 mend it to trained neurologists and physi-
cians. Its attention to current research and
new lines of thought in migraine is refresh-
 ing, but it is not a comprehensive, nor a
balanced account to present to a trainee. In
the end the infuriating enigma of migraine
drives us back to a nice quotation in the
Foreword, attributed to A Soulairac: "La
sensation de la douleur est essentiellement
un phénomène d'intégration nerveuse sur-
précieuse."

JMS PEARCE

Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry/IV
(4th Ed.). Edited by Harold I Kaplan and
Benjamin J Sadock. (Pp 2054; £132.00.)

This large and costly book is described in
the foreword as constituting "a thorough
and complete introduction to clinical psychi-
atriy, sufficiently comprehensive to prepare
an American post-graduate student for his
examinations in psychiatry". To meet this
objective it contains sections (almost text-
books in their own right) on the biological
sciences relevant to psychiatry, and on psy-
chology, neurology, the socio-cultural sci-
ences, experimental method and psycho-
dynamic theory. These occupy the first 500
pages, the remaining 1,500 pages being given
to clinical adult and child psychiatry. It is
published as part of a series which includes a
somewhat smaller synopsis of the Compre-
hensive Textbook and a study guide and
self-examination review of the synopsis.

The underlying purpose of the publication
of the first (1967) edition was to correct "the
pathetic overselling of psychiatry which had
taken place in the 1960s" by indicating that
psychiatry had a definite scientific basis and
was limited in its scope by clear boundaries.
There was, in addition, an important sub-
liminal message contained in its emphasis on
clinical syndromes. The fourth edition is
described as no longer needing to be so
defensive, and as a result has been reduced in
size "to make that statement with clarity
and dignity!"

To assess the scope and quality of a book
of this size is difficult, particularly when it
is written for a practice of psychiatry and an
examination system different from ours,
even though those differences are becoming
less. It is very hard to maintain tight editing
of such a mammoth enterprise and inevita-
ably contributions are of varying standards.
Certainly the inclusion of a section on clin-
ical neurology seems of doubtful value to us
because of its brevity and lack of emphasis
on the inter-relationships with psychiatry.
There is a separate chapter making some of
the connections but it seems rather inade-
quate. Again one could argue that knowl-
edge of the other sciences relating to
psychiatry would also be better gained by
references to independent texts on each sub-
ject in spite of the comments of the consult-
ing editor that "many of the chapters on the
basic sciences are truly outstanding". There
are some very good contributions in clinical
psychiatry on schizophrenia and affective
disorder and some poor ones, for instance
on puerperal illness, suicide and thanatol-
ogy. The psychiatry of old age is accorded a
mere seven pages.

The laudable aim of reducing the size of
this fourth edition (from 4,000 to just over
2,000 pages), although it makes this book
slightly easier to handle, may have resulted
in some loss of quality. For example, the
third edition contains a clear account of
existential psychotherapy whereas the briefer
account in the fourth edition is almost incomprehensible. The chapter on
suicide in the third edition includes a dis-
cussion of parasuicide and of the assessment
of suicidal risk which I cannot find in the
fourth edition. Earlier editions contained
comprehensive lists of references, not be added
few key ones are included, perhaps reducing
its usefulness to those who are interested in
the development of thinking on a particular
topic.

Comprehensive textbooks have always
been attractive and give the insecure student
a sense of reassurance that all he needs to
know is within those covers. The issuing of
two reprints of the third edition and publica-
tion of a fourth must indicate the enter-
prise's popularity in the USA. On this side of
the Atlantic similar sorts of books are
appearing, but they tend to be more limited
in scope and to deal separately with the
basic sciences and the clinical psychiatry
required for the Membership examination.
Their smaller size tends to make effective
text eating possible and the books are much easier
to handle, but the overall cost to students may be more. This book would never be ade-
quate for post-graduate students in this
country, but gives useful insights into
psychiatric practice in the USA. Because of
this it may be a useful volume to include in
the libraries of academic departments. It
would be an inappropriate but dangerously
attractive purchase for hospital libraries.
For most students in this country, reference
to one of the similar but less "comprehen-
sive" volumes would provide a useful basis
from which to read more widely.

ISOBEL R CARD

Theory and Treatment of Anorexia Nervosa
and Bulimia: Biomedical, Sociocultural,
and Psychological Perspectives. Edited by Rev
Steven W Emmett. (Pp 420; $41.00.) New
York: Brunner/Mazel Inc. Outside North

Despite the rather unusual credentials of
the editor (psychotherapist and church min-
ister), this 420 page volume provides a
reasonably balanced view of the theory
and treatment of anorexia nervosa and
bulimia. Contributors include physicians,
psychiatrists, psychotherapists, sociologists,