The book is generously illustrated with a
large number of clinical images many of
which are of the brain or spinal cord. The
only criticism of these is that some of the
images are not of the highest quality and
may not reflect the present state of the art.

The book therefore constitutes a useful
introduction for a reader being introduced
to MRI for the first time and would be a
welcome addition to any clinical library. It
will not, however, serve as a reference test
donors it aim to do so and a useful list of
further key references is provided although
rather more extensive referencing would be
useful for the more inquisitive.

IAN EC ORMEROD

Mental Handicap: A Multi-disciplinary
Approach. Edited by Michael Craft, Joan
Bicknell and Sheila Hollins. (Pp 409;
£30.00.) Eastbourne: Holt-Saunders Ltd,
1985.

"This book is the successor to Tredgold's
textbook..." asserts Professor Bicknell
in the opening sentence. "However", she con-
tinues, "...the replacement of the medical
model by the multidisciplinary approach has
causd us to produce an entirely new book." On
one can only agree that with three editors
and forty contributors, this book bears little
resemblance to the original Tredgold. Is it,
though, an entirely new book?

Tredgold, writing in the early years of this
century, was concerned mainly with descrip-
tion of the variety of "syndromes" which had
mental handicap as their common fea-
ture. Later editions increasingly recognised
differing degrees and types of disability, and
the postulated aetiologies largely reflected
the prejudices and concerns of the era. In
that sense Tredgold defined the current state
of the art, and that is no less true of this
present volume. Gone is the rigid catego-
risation of mentally handicapped persons
according to supposed aetiology; instead
there is a comprehensive overview of the var-
ious elements (education, health and social
services) which together make up a modern
service. For maintaining a fairly consistent
style throughout the book and avoiding glar-
ing overlap between chapters, the editors are
to be congratulated. The impressive quality
of the proof-reading is another plus.

Broadly speaking, the major topics cov-
ered are service organisation, legal aspects,
individual aspects (including aetiological
considerations) educational issues and inter-
vention strategies. Service organisation is
presented, probably appropriately, in a
fairly descriptive manner and the concept of
normalisation in the delivery of human ser-
VICES is introduced as a general theme of the
text. As a sophisticated discussion of public
policy development, I particularly liked
Malcolm Johnson's chapter; his comment
"Mental handicap policy probably repre-
sents the most radical and coherent thrust
for positive change to be found on the UK
scene" illustrates the quality of his thought.

Of particular interest to the practising
professional, the chapters on Intervention
take the Community Mental Handicap
Team as the central element of service pro-
vision, and draw together the variety of con-
tributions of the different members. Overall,
I think the authors succeed in this notably
difficult task. In Chapter 24, Hollins hints at
the difficulties of achieving successful team-
work, but unfortunately has little space
to elaborate on team building skills. Perhaps
that topic is worth a textbook all of its own!

Further positive aspects of this volume
include the attempts by all the authors to
support their conclusions with detailed refer-
cences to the literature, and the descriptions
of North American practices in community
care and special education. Unfortunately,
like any textbook, this too has its weakness.
Most notable is the (presumably deliberate)
avoidance of serious controversy. Perhaps
that is the price to be paid for having an
overall coherent thrust. Even so, some dis-
cussion would surely be warranted of the
inevitable conflict and compromise implicit
in public policy formulation: an example
would be the dialectic between vaccine dam-
ge compensation for the few and the need
to attain agreed minimal standards for the
many. Smaller criticisms include lack of dis-
cussion of the economic costs of change and
the comparative lack of pointers towards
future research.

Overall then, this is a textbook of interest
to a number of professional groups and
those responsible for service planning and
the allocation of funds. It is not a "hands
on" book in the sense of telling a newly
appointed professional how to begin. Per-
haps a good beginning would be to read this
book!

The broad scope of this book is, I feel, at
once both its strength and its weakness. On
account of its general interest, this book will
find a place in the libraries of Community
Mental Handicap Teams and specialised
professional workers. What though of the
needs of psychiatrists specialising in, or hav-
ing a special interest in, the psychiatry of
mental handicap? This was after all the tar-
get audience of Tredgold's original text-
book. For them, apart from a valuable over-
view of the current scene, this book has
comparatively little to offer. Of most direct
relevance is Chapter 28 by Andrew Reid, but
this essentially just summarises his own
paperback on the subject. Nowhere is to be
found the detailed approach to history-
taking and mental state examination approp-
riate to the mentally handicapped person
and their family. One is left no wiser about,
for example, the recognition of a mood dis-
order in an autistic person or the specific
clinical signs of a demening illness in a per-
son with Down's Syndrome. Of course, Reid
alludes to those in general terms, but not in
anything like the detail required by the doc-
tor in clinical practice. As far as I can see,
such a book has yet to be written. If, when
it is, it will become the true successor to
Tredgold, in theme, if not in lineage.

LB CAMPBELL

Photoperiodism, melatonin and the pineal.
(CIBA Foundation Symposium 117.) (Pp
323; £27.95.) London: Pitman Publish-
ing Ltd, USA: Medical Educational Di-

At first sight the pineal does not look very
exciting, but being in the middle of the head
it has long been considered to have some
central function. The isolation of the pineal
hormone melatonin by Aaron Lerner in
1958, and the anatomical studies which have
identified a retinal-suprachiasmatic nucleus-
pineal pathway have been major achieve-
ments of modern neurobiology. The pineal
of lower vertebrates has been revealed as an
endocrine organ, a biological clock, and the
classical "third eye", whilst that of higher
mammals has been shown to function as a
sensory organ that detects photoperiod. A
modern caesium atomic clock has an error
of less than 0-00001 s/day, but cannot adjust
to the outside world; in contrast, the mam-

The study of pain is a particularly multidisciplinary area of medicine and keeping up-to-date is therefore especially difficult. It is a hopeless task attempting to be familiar with advances in fields as disparate as neurophysiology, neurochemistry, neurology, surgery, anaesthesia, and psychiatry, and one is therefore thankful to the International Association for the Study of Pain under whose auspices have appeared the journal Pain with its periodic references to the current literature, and books such as the present Advances in Pain Research and Therapy.

This book comprises selected papers from the Proceedings of the Fourth World Congress on Pain held in Seattle in 1984, and as with previous volumes in this series, it is immutably and expensively produced by Raven Press. The book is of course only as good as the papers delivered at the symposium, and there are some very good papers indeed. The individual styles of the contributors I think enhance rather than detract from the overall presentation, and certainly make more interesting reading. Since there is little attempt at cohesion and so many topics are covered, whether the reader will find what he is looking for may be unpredictable, and I suspect the book will be mainly used for browsing or specific reference purposes, especially in view of its high price.

Readers of this book, however, will be rewarded by some outstanding contributions. A personal selection would include Perl's masterly introductory overview "Unraveling the story of pain", Basbaum's update on cytochemistry of the dorsal horn, Willis' contribution on thalamocortical mechanisms, and a thoughtful and very up-to-date chapter on evoked cerebral potentials and pain by Bromm. The chapter on mechanisms of neuropathic pain by Ochoa and colleagues has the great bonus of a particularly lucid as well as entertaining style ("Anyone who claims to understand how the sympathetic system influences pain is probably mistaken or has chosen to explain only some aspects of a complex issue"), and neurologists will be as intrigued as surgeons that over the past five years Rosomoff's unit has managed over 1000 patients with monstratrated intrasural compressive lesions like herniated disks or bony stenosis without surgical removal; despite leaving the space-occupying lesion in situ, management of the peripheral musculoskeletal problems has resulted in restoration of function even at long-term follow-up of up to seven years, and good relief of pain.

This book undoubtedly records the state of the art in 1984, and fully justifies its title. Contributors, editors and publisher are to be congratulated.

GD SCHOTT


Although there is very little of McAlpine's remaining in this, the fourth edition of Multiple Sclerosis, the editors do explain that they continue to use his name in the title in order to honour his enthusiasm for the creation of the original Multiple Sclerosis, published in 1959 together with Compston and Lumsden.

This book has become the definitive work on multiple sclerosis. The editors have rearranged the script into three sections. The first, by Donald Aitchison is concerned with the epidemiology of the disease. Brian Matthers discusses the clinical aspects of multiple sclerosis and finally the immunological and pathological aspects are shared by Batchelor and Roy Weller.

The epidemiology of multiple sclerosis has fascinated neurologists for many years and Aitchison takes us through the development of our understanding of its epidemiology and also outlines the known epidemiological facts which point so clearly to pathogenesis.

Brian Matthews' writings on the clinical aspects of the disease are masterly and here any student of the disorder will find answers to many of the questions he may have posed in his clinical practice. The common and unusual presentations of the disorder are clearly described and although Matthews modestly states that "the differential diagnosis of multiple sclerosis obviously covers a large field in clinical neurology and cannot be covered completely in a brief chapter", he has almost achieved just that.

A chapter follows on the laboratory diagnosis of the disease with a clearly written review of the value of evoked potential studies and a critical but very fair discussion of the recent controversy over the possibility of