

Mending Minds. By L L HESTON (Pp 233; Price: H/b £17.95. P/b £9.95). 1992. Oxford, W. H. Freeman & Co. Ltd. ISBN 0-7167-2158-9, 0-7167-2167-8.

This is a guidebook for patients, their friends and their relatives to the changing landscape of the "New Psychiatry". Non-technical writing, and recurring sections entitled "If you think you have . . ." or "If a friend or relative has . . ." well fulfil its laudable intentions. It is good on depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, dementia, and alcohol abuse; less good on anxiety disorder, drug abuse; and antisocial personality; and weak on problems of sexuality.

The book's triumphalist conclusion, "The Future of Mental Illness", rashly promises "The causes of mental illness". The author reveals himself as an unreconstructed believer in the bio-medical model, with the gene as its Rosetta Stone. The environment is often ignored or denigrated: thus, saying "investigators cannot specify a single environmental contributor to schizophrenia" (p.209), ignores neurodevelopmental anomalies in aetiology, or expressed emotions in relapse. Behavioural/cognitive therapies are barely mentioned for phobias, anxiety disorders, or depression, and psychotherapy seems merely to mean family education about the new wonder drugs and the future glories and hopes from understanding DNA. Occasionally the book's balance is eccentric: two pages on the arcane molecular biology of heat-shock proteins illustrate the bizarre suggestion that stress, "as used in environmental studies . . . lacks measurable physical properties, so it is undefined . . ." and progress must wait until we have "translated stress to the levels [typified in the biology of the heat-shock proteins]".

At its best this book is very good, explaining difficult ideas well. The section "If you are considering ECT . . ." is exemplary. But it is narrowed by being written by a physician interested principally in biology. Its insular American view will restrict its utility elsewhere, since drug names are unfamiliar, legal procedures irrelevant, colloquialisms obscure (What is a "barrio?"), and assumptions are parochial (in depression, "get firearms out of the home").

CHRIS McMANUS

Child and Adolescent Neurology for Psychiatrists Edited by DM KAUFMAN, GE SOLOMON and CR PFEFFER. (Pp 269; Price: £40.00). 1992. London, Williams & Wilkin. ISBN 0-683-04546-6.

This book has a good go at filling a gap in the books that Child Psychiatrists and Paediatricians ought to be reading. The increase in techniques for the recognition of brain disorders underlying disagreeable behaviour strongly suggests that all child specialists would benefit from greater acquaintance with those diseases liable to present in ways that bring them to specialists other than Child Neurologists. Even to entertain the notion of organic causation has slipped below the horizon of possibilities for all too many Child psychiatrists, especially in Britain. But that failure is not unique to them. The needs are clearly stated by Tanguay in his useful preface.

There are excellent chapters on Neuromuscular diseases, on Movement Disorders, and on Progressive disorders of the nervous system. Most of the topics of Paediatric Neurology are represented.

The book does not fulfil its intention of making a bridge between the disciplines because the authors, and the editors, make no allowance for the cast of mind or the level of knowledge of their proposed readership. No consideration is given to the special manner in which these diseases will present when they appear in their various disguises in the clinics of non-neurologists. This is an area in which the potential reader needs to be seduced, persuaded towards seeing the value of this point of view. For the most part the reader is simply hit over the head by the facts as in any hard nosed volume of paediatric neurology they might come upon. But, for a rich library its worth a look until a second edition comes along.

DC TAYLOR

Static Encephalopathies of Infancy and Childhood. Edited by G MILLER and JC RAMER (Pp 372 Illustrated; Price: \$144.00). 1992. New York, Raven Press. ISBN 0-88167-872-4.

Chronic, non-progressive brain disorders constitute a major cause of childhood and adult disability and are certainly the most frequent reason for referral to the paediatric neurologist. Lesions of the developing brain occurring before, during or after birth result in a wide variety of deficits affecting intellectual and motor development. The editors of this multi-author book have aimed to provide an in-depth account of the subject and to illustrate those specific conditions where recent advances in neuro-imaging and molecular genetics have led to more precise understanding of their aetiology. The recognition of a genetic or developmental abnormality of the brain not only has important implications for the child and his family, but is crucial when medico-legal action is being considered for presumptive birth injury.

The first section of the book gives an overview of the definition, causation and management problems of mental retardation and cerebral palsy, attention being given to behavioural problems, the importance of communication with parents, and ethics of treatment. A chapter on "neurodevelopmental evaluation" is, unfortunately of limited use to the UK practitioner, dealing largely with these tests used in the US. However, the chapter on imaging by Barkovich is excellent, with a clear text and superb MRI illustrations, particularly of the malformations. The later sections of the book cover a selection of specific retardation syndromes, including a description of the phenomenon of genomic imprinting, as illustrated by Angelman and Prader-Willi syndromes. The account by Dobyns, of the causes and consequences of cerebral dysgenesis, is particularly interesting. The book also covers acquired brain lesions, ranging from hypoxic/ischaemic injury, to the CNS effects of cocaine in children.

This book will be of interest to paediatricians and neurologists, particularly in training. It is expensive at \$144.00, but would be recommended for departmental

libraries to complement standard paediatric neurology texts.

STEPHANIE A ROBB

Biological Risk Factors for Psychosocial Disorders. Edited by M RUTTER & P CASAER (Pp 346; Price: H/B £40.00; \$64.95). 1991. Cambridge, University Press. ISBN 0-521-40103-8.

The highly complex relationship between the development of the brain and our psychological and social development has been recognised for many years. Increasing knowledge however seems to underline rather than resolve these complexities, and a book addressing these issues faces unique challenges. Can a multi-author book originating in conference proceedings succeed?

On the whole I think it does. The opening sentence of the forward is not promising for those seeking illumination: "An individual functions and develops as a totality in a way that can be described as a multi-determined stochastic process". Readers should nevertheless press on. Here is a well edited and organised collection of papers beginning with an up to date and readable account of the development of the human brain. In the following chapter, perhaps the most lucid and cogently argued of all, Robert Goodwin outlines the putative role of insults to the developing brain in causing psycho-social disorders, and examines critical issues of timing and localisation. Other authors present informative and wide ranging views of psychogenetics, pre- and peri-natal risk factors and metabolic/endocrine disorders.

As the authors repeatedly acknowledge, our capacity for conjecture in these areas far outstrips our capacity for refutation. Nevertheless, with the increasing sophistication of investigative procedures, over the next few years many of the imaginative hypotheses explored in this book will take their place under the microscope. This is a useful reference work for practitioners and researchers in the fields of autism, mental impairment, language, speech and other "developmental" disorders.

GLYNN HARRISON

Measurement in Neurological Rehabilitation. By DERICK T WADE (Pp 388; Price: £25.00). 1992. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-261954-3.

A natural consequence of Neurologists' reputation for obsessionality is a habituation to objective measurements aimed at achieving precision from the imprecise. This book is not, as the title suggests, primarily about rehabilitation, but is a collection of a variety of assessment scales which find use both in neurological disease and advancing disability.

It ranges from behavioural, cognitive, depression and social assessments, through multiple sclerosis, strokes, head and spinal injuries, and Parkinson's disease. Each section deals with the background problems and provides selected scales accompanied by comment and reference.

A worthy, if laborious compilation, of considerable use and convenience between two paperback covers.