

to sustain through 24 consecutive hours the otherwise drooping animal energies.

This volume grapples most logically and clearly with the difficulties of language, which is inherent when two disciplines are brought together. For instance, depression to the psychiatrist is a definite clinical problem; the pharmacologist however, only understands it as lessening the function of any organ. It was found illuminating to read the consequential discussion of definition in the chapter on antidepressant drugs. The discussion of the monoamine oxidase inhibitors is balanced and sobering, particularly when the various antidepressants are evaluated within each group of drugs, such as the tricyclic antidepressants. The lack of successful and authoritative comparative clinical trials by which to justify the millions of tablets ingested annually is a terrifying thought, and either shows the tremendous success of their promotion by various makers or the emotional attitude of prescribers, still looking for the magic remedy. Naturally, ECT is also extensively discussed, as is drug addiction. Though in no position to criticize, I was sorry the authors did not see fit to refer to the basic work of Sir Jack Gaddum on lysergic acid in their so very erudite series of references.

As with most books in a field where the frontiers of knowledge are pushed back continuously, this one may well be out of date in some of its important discussions (for instance lithium therapy), yet its very objectives and wide discussion will make it a most worthwhile review book for some years to come of a tremendously vital subject.

**Guide to steroid therapy.** PICTON THOMAS, M.D., M.R.C.P. London. Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books) Ltd. 1968. Pp. viii+223. Price 37s. 6d.

Steroid therapy is now widely used in most departments of medicine, but its role in the suppression and modification of symptoms is still a matter for argument and conjecture.

Dr Picton Thomas's book falls into two parts. The first section is general, and deals with the chemistry and complications of steroid therapy, the effect on endogenous endocrine function, and tests of that function as a guide to the chemical results of therapy. The second section describes substitution therapy, treatment with androgens, oestrogens, progestins and aldosterone, and the use and abuse of corticosteroids in diseases of every system of the body. A valuable feature is its firm selection of those situations in which corticosteroid therapy is *not* likely to be of value, and its insistence on the suppressive function of these drugs. A patient first faced with the necessity for such treatment is likely to be alarmed if he is moderately well-informed, but later he and his doctor may be lulled into a sense of false security as symptoms disappear. It is important to remember that corticosteroids never cure, often cause toxic effects and may make some diseases worse. This book maintains a due sense of proportion, and is a useful guide for the general practitioner faced with the management of patients on long-term treatment. The references at the end of each chapter furnish the means of more detailed information for those who seek it.

**Modern trends in pharmacology and therapeutics.** Edited by W. F. M. FULTON, B.Sc., M.D., M.R.C.P. London. Butterworths. 1967. Pp. x+372. Price £4 5s.

A welcome development in the teaching of medicine has been the tendency towards integration of pure pharmacology with its clinical application, and an increasing establishment of university departments of pharmacology and thera-