

gaps. We are told that there are three types of study, the cross sectional type which studies the situation as it is here and now; the prospective study which follows the progress of the patient into the future, and the hazardous retrospective study of the past. No worker is more fitted to conduct a prospective study than the family doctor who can observe his patients closely over the years. The use of the general practitioner is mentioned from time to time, and the late Dr Mayer-Gross suggested that collaboration with the College of General Practitioners was worth considering. Statistical methods, ratings, punch cards, surveys, genetics are all described and evaluated. Because of the subjective nature of psychiatry, research is in fact more difficult than with organic disease where objective findings, chemical, serological, or radiological changes may often be demonstrated. Research in general practice has many of these self same difficulties, and even if objective tests are applicable, they are not often as readily available to the general practitioner as to the hospital doctor. This excellent book deserves the widest publicity among all who are interested in research, no matter what their field. It is especially useful to those who undertake observational research.

An Introduction to Physical Methods of Treatment in Psychiatry. Fourth edition. WILLIAM SARGANT, M.A., M.B., F.R.C.P., and ELIOT SLATER, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P., assisted by PETER DALLY, M.B., M.R.C.P. Edin. and London. E. and S. Livingstone, Ltd. 1963. Pp. vii + 346. Price 30s.

The authors state that this book is in its main emphasis a report on methods of treatment they have used personally, and of their own findings obtained with them. They make it clear also that this is not a complete text-book; such subjects as physiotherapy and occupational therapy are not discussed. What they do discuss as physical methods of treatment comprise drug treatment, (including drugs to aid psychotherapy), convulsion therapy, prefrontal leucotomy, continuous sleep treatment, modified insulin therapy, and insulin stupor and coma. As the experience of the authors is very extensive, these parts of the book are of great interest and authority. Apart from drug treatment, the methods described are not usually undertaken in family practice, but reference to the book would be helpful to a general practitioner wishing to understand why a psychiatrist recommends a particular treatment for a patient, and to weigh up its advantages and risks.

There are also chapters on diet, vitamins and endocrines (by Dr John Pollitt), on epilepsy (by Professor Denis Hill), on the treatment of alcoholic and other addictions (which designedly does not include morphia or cocaine), and a final chapter entitled The Relation of Psychological to Somatic Treatment.

This final chapter appears to differ in aim from the rest of the book, which is in the main an admirably clear exposition of actual experience in the techniques of the therapies described. But in this chapter the authors appear to be emotionally involved in a defence of their mechanistic approach and an attack on the claims of those who practise psychotherapy. Physical methods are proving valuable, especially in the psychoses. On

the other hand, in the common neuroses, the bulk of whose management falls to the lot of the family doctor, psychotherapy is the best tool we have.

Psychiatry is concerned with largely undiscovered country, into which explorations are still being made; doubtless new aspects will be disclosed in years to come. The complete map will be soonest made when all explorers, rather than discredit the methods and discoveries of each other, unite to increase the sum of knowledge.

Aspects of Psychiatric Research. Edited by D. RICHTER, J. M. TANNER, LORD TAYLOR, and O. L. ZANGWILL. Lond., N.Y., and Toronto. Oxford University Press, 1962. Pp. v + 445. Price 63s.

The research committee of the Mental Health Research Fund and the editors of this comprehensive volume are to be congratulated on the uniformly high standard of the book. It is by no means easy to produce a series of chapters by different authors in which the balance is preserved, and repetition avoided, but this has been achieved. The wide field covered in the comparatively short space of 439 pages is most creditable. Sir Geoffrey Vickers opens the series by a challenging chapter on the problem of mental illness in our British culture. Striking facts are produced. Mental illness costs the country about a quarter of the N.H.S. income: 44 per cent of the hospital beds are in mental institutions; schizophrenia is responsible for more bed-years of hopeless illness than any other disease. It is not possible to summarize each of the twenty chapters, but the taste is catholic. The reviewer who has had no psycho-analytic training, was captivated by Dr John Bowlby's thesis on childhood bereavement and its relationship to psychiatric illness, carefully worked out step by step. Psycho-analytic arguments on schizophrenia in one chapter are countered by observations on biochemical factors of the disease as shown in the plasma and serum of schizophrenic patients. One is gently introduced to the complex subject of neuropharmacology, and such technical chapters as this and one on chromosome abnormalities are eminently readable. Besides the chapters already mentioned there are others on the evolution and meaning of the Mental Health Act; epidemiology, crime, industry, and genetics, to mention only a few. The book is well printed with an excellent list of references at the end of each contribution. The reader feels that he is being brought up to date in many divergent fields of psychiatry, all for the cost of three guineas. The book is recommended to all who are interested in social medicine, psychiatry, and psychiatric research.

A Short Textbook of Medicine. First edition. J. C. HOUSTON, M.D., F.R.C.P., C. L. JOINER, M.D., M.R.C.P., J. R. TROUNCE, M.D., M.R.C.P. The English Universities Press Ltd. 1962. Pp. x + 564. Price 25s. paper bound. 35s. board bound.

This book strikes a very happy medium between the text-book and the synopsis and has been written mainly for medical students. The editor's foreword claims, "It is a concise account of the subject with more than