

BOOK REVIEW

THE EFFECT OF PHARMACOLOGIC AGENTS ON THE NERVOUS SYSTEM, EDITED BY FRANCIS J. BRACELAND, 1957. BAILLIERE, TINDALL AND COX, LONDON.

Since the earlier suggestion of Ambassador Borberg (of Denmark to the United Nations) to develop the science of Chemopsychology to affect human behaviour, and the later giant strides made in neuro and psychopharmacology, particularly after the discovery of chlorpromazine, reserpine and related tranquilizers, extraordinarily rapid advances have been made in the field of nervous and mental diseases. That these specialities have come to stay and have attained an eminent position is evidenced by the appearance within a comparatively short period of a surprisingly large number of excellent monographs and international journals devoted to the subject.

The Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Diseases has been publishing its memoirs since 1920. This volume, published as the 37th in this series, has been based on the proceedings of the association held in December 1957 in New York, with the participation of forty experts. The compendium is thus the outcome of the research activities and the considered evaluation of these investigators. It covers a wide range of topics from fields of psychology, neurology, medicine and allied disciplines and clearly brings about their interrelations. It provides a comprehensive review of the present knowledge of the subject. Although the discussions reported therein reveal at times wide differences of opinion as to technique and interpretation of results, they also reveal substantial areas of agreement and certainly convey a strong feeling that these agents can be used clinically and also as experimental tools. It also emphasises the fact that the experimental studies on the pharmacology of behavioural drugs includes techniques applicable to molecular and cellular structures at one extreme and the intact organism at the other; presumably the effect on the large organismal units can be formulated in terms of modifications of functions produced by the drugs in the smaller ones.

The book has been presented in excellent print and is remarkably free from typographical errors and mistakes in structural formulae of the compounds mentioned therein. It can certainly be recommended to all workers in the field.

K. N. S.