

Boekbesprekings : Book Reviews

PHARMACOPSYCHIATRY

Modern Problems of Pharmacopsychiatry. Vol. 9. Trazodone. Ed. by Th.A. Ban and B. Silvestrini. Pp. 210. SFr. 75.-. Basel and London: S. Karger. 1974.

The present volume on the problems inherent in pharmacopsychiatry represents the ninth of a series of monographs published over the years under the distinguished auspices of Th.A. Ban of Montreal, F. A. Freyhan, of Washington, D.C., P. Pichot of Paris and W. Poldinger of Vienna.

The drug which has engaged the attention of this sturdy band of scientists in the treatment of various forms of mental disorder — the psychoneuroses and the psychoses, for example — goes by the name of Trazodone, 2-(n-(m-chlorophenyl)-piperazino)-propyl-5-triazolo-(4,3-a) Pyridine-3-one. It is a new psychotropic drug with a spectrum of pharmacological activity unlike that of any known preparation. It has been found to be most effective in the treatment of various depressive and anxiety states.

Since these two forms of mental disorder constitute the majority of cases encountered in psychiatric practice, it is heartening to note the high claims which are being made for what is obviously a remarkable drug. However, the results of further trials will be eagerly and hopefully awaited by the entire medical world.

L.F.F.

CATECHOLAMINES IN HYPERTENSION

Role of Catecholamines in Cardiovascular Diseases. 1. Hypertension. By Budh Dev Bhagat. Pp. x + 200. Illustrated. \$17.50. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1974.

There are good reasons for studying the role of catecholamines in the pathogenesis of hypertension, and there is now a very considerable literature on the subject. However, much of this is confusing and contradictory, and there is a great need for a balanced and critical appraisal.

The present volume makes no contribution in this regard. Its first section is no more than a mediocre account of the biochemistry and metabolism of the catecholamines. The second part on their physiological role does not progress beyond the elementary and pedestrian. Especially unnerving is the author's classification of beta-adrenergic receptors, which is a complete reversal of that conventionally accepted.

The third section, on aetiological and clinical aspects, is oversimplified to the point of being inaccurate and misleading. Hypothesis is accepted as fact. Recommendations regarding the investigation of hypertensive patients are impractical, and display poor judgement.

In summary I can see little virtue in this slight but expensive volume.

H.C.S.