Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry in Japan
Advances in Psychosomatic Medicine

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Preface

No longer can psychiatry be sequested in isolated asylums. With the development of psychiatric departments in medical schools and general hospitals it has been feasible to develop clinical units that focus upon the medically ill population. The subspecialty of psychiatry, commonly known as consultation-liaison psychiatry, provides the linkage between the issues that compromise psychological and biological health. Within Japan, consultation-liaison psychiatry has grown from a few brave pioneers to a dynamic group of many such physicians who work in medical settings and provide clinical care, teaching, and research to colleagues in other specialties of medicine. It is with great pride that this volume introduces the achievements of Japanese consultation psychiatry to a wider audience. I would like to thank Professor Thomas Wise and Mr. Steven Karger for the opportunity to publish this book.

The volume contains seven chapters that review basic issues in our field. The book begins with an historical overview of consultation-liaison psychiatry in Japan and attends to the present situation of the subspecialty. The role of psychiatry within oncology and renal medicine follows. The next chapter discusses psychiatric issues in organ transplantation. The problems of living with HIV/AIDS is the next contribution. The role of medications in inducing psychiatric disorders is presented and the book concludes with a chapter discussing psychological issues in diabetes. These papers are not only germane to Japan but will provide information that is useful to physicians throughout the world. Psychological distress in the medically ill is a universal phenomena. It is a reaction that defines us as human beings who exist in a biopsychosocial matrix. Within that context, consultation-liaison psychiatry and its focus is truly an international medical subspecialty.

Isao Fukunishi