BOOK REVIEWS

PATHOLOGY OF THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM

A study based upon a survey of lesions found in a series of fifteen thousand autopsies

Cyril B. Courville

(Pacific Press, California. 1937. 26s.)

As the title indicates, the book is based upon the large experience obtained in about fifteen thousand autopsies which have been evaluated by the author and his pupils. It may be for this reason that expectations are extremely high. If allowance is made for the objective of the book in attempting to present the gross "Kinetic" aspects of brain pathology rather than histological detail, the impression after reading the book is not wholly satisfactory. It may be conceded that some of the chapters on gross pathology, particularly those dealing with tumours, diseases of the intracranial blood vessels, infectious and traumatic diseases, are good and give much useful and in places original information. It is doubtful, however, whether the neglect of histological detail can be carried so far as to present vague statements. For it is stated that in general paralysis the iron is found in ganglion cells; no mention is made of the cellular elements in which it is really deposited. It is also stated that the well-known rod cells are derived from the interfascicular glia. Again, Pick’s disease is characterized as a disease of the white matter. It is suggested that the characteristic feature of "Pelizæus-Merzbacher’s disease" is a perivascular demyelination. It is hoped that in a future edition a close revision of the histological matter will be undertaken.

PRÉCIS D’ANATOMO-PHYSIOLOGIE NORMALE ET PATHOLOGIQUE DU SYSTÈME NERVEUX CENTRAL

Pierre Pasquin and J. O. Trelles

(Gaston Doin et Cie., Paris. 1937. 165 frs.)

The authors have succeeded in producing a readable summary of all the detailed anatomy of the nervous system. Each chapter has a brief section devoted to a summary of the experimental physiology of the region concerned and another to description of syndromes. Every conceivable nervous pathway is described and the excellent diagrams have the traditional clarity of French text-books. The views expressed are modern and a well-selected list of bibliography is given for each section. The book can be recommended as a reference book, though it is too full for the ordinary student, and its brief and schematic description does not allow much discrimination between what is useful and well-founded and what is obscure and semi-hypothetical. As an attempt to present the anatomy, physiology, and pathology of the nervous system all under one cover, it presents too ambitious a survey of anatomy to be found ideal by clinical neurologists.
BOOK REVIEWS

PRACTICAL NEURO-ANATOMY

G. H. Globus
(Baillière, Tindall and Cox, London. 1937. 27s.)

This is essentially a book to be used in the practical class-room where facilities for dissection and for the study of microscope slides are available. The arrangement of the matter is such that the student is allotted a series of dissections to undertake, and, provided the student adheres to the directions, he will be amply rewarded by a clear and lucid description of the structures of the nervous system. The author, however, has gone further and included some chapters on the physiology of the nervous system. While welcoming any attempt to relate function and structure, it is doubtful if the author has been able to do himself full justice within the limits of the present book. The desirability of including in a book on practical neuro-anatomy nine pages devoted to a description of clinical examples of syndromes is open to question. The author is to be complimented on the style of printing and clear drawings. The photographs of sections through the brain stem and medulla are smaller than those of the spinal cord. This is unfortunate, as the structure of the former is more complicated than the latter and requires more detailed study.

THE DIAGNOSIS OF NERVOUS DISEASE

Sir James Purves-Stewart

This book already belongs to the group of standard works in clinical neurology which are indispensable both for students and specialists. With its comprehensive anatomical and physiological outlook and the clinical and theoretical details, it represents much more than a mere text-book of the symptomatology of nervous diseases. In this edition the knowledge gained in neurology in the last six years has been added.

PERSPECTIVES IN BIOCHEMISTRY

F. G. Hopkins
(Cambridge University Press, London. 1937. 15s.)

Collected in this volume are 31 essays prepared by past and present members of Sir Gowland Hopkins' laboratory. Each essay is in itself a wealth of knowledge expressing the view-point of the author in a given subject. Happily, the subjects chosen have allowed a play of expression by the individual authors and cover a wide range. Philosophical thought is encountered in all and as a source of stimulation for future workers this volume is indeed rich. Clearly printed, delightfully bound, this is a volume worthy of its purpose—a presentation to Sir Gowland Hopkins. It is to be hoped that it will form a standard for presentation volumes; it could not be bettered.

SURGERY OF THE SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

G. E. Gask and J. Paterson Ross
(Baillière, Tindall and Cox, London. 1937. 16s.)

This is a second edition of a useful book. The authors continue to express in guarded terms the indications for surgical intervention in a variety of maladies. The student with an enquiring mind will find much to stimulate him. As a balanced statement of the present position of the surgery of the sympathetic system, the book is to be commended.
BOOK REVIEWS

TUMOURS OF THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM


(The Williams Wilkins Co., Baltimore. 1937. 34s.)

The book contains 16 papers which cover a wide aspect of the subject. Most papers not only refer to original work done by the authors but also give a general survey on the special theme. In this way the book represents an excellent review on the tumour problem. It is not possible in the course of a review to give this volume adequate consideration. As a source of valuable information the book stands out pre- eminent.

MEDICO-LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE RUXTON CASE

John Glaister. James Couper Brash

(E. and S. Livingstone, Edinburgh. 1937. 21s.)

Although this work deals solely with the medico-legal investigations in one notorious murder case, it should be read by everyone concerned in any way or even interested in medico-legal work. The book presents more clearly than ever has been done before the close co-operation necessary between the many medical and scientific experts and the police, in order that such a case may be brought to a successful conclusion. The probable identification of the dismembered remains by an anatomist assisted by a photographer, the work of an entomologist in determining the probable time of exposure of the remains by recognition of the larvae present are unique in medico-legal literature.

In the less unusual sections, such as the identification of blood-stains, the book gives an example of thoroughness which should be studied carefully by anyone likely to be concerned in any important medico-legal investigation.