activities of the body are considered to some extent as controlled by the central nervous system, was undoubtedly influenced by the views of Botkins, one of his earliest chiefs; and this conception presumably influences Speeranski and his followers in our own day.

Sechenov's "Reflexes of the Brain" was probably the main source of Pavlov's first interest in conditioned reflexes as a method of approaching behaviour and "psychic" activity. These questions are fully discussed in the biography, but the reference to Bechterov, whose contributions to neurophysiology remain important, is perhaps unduly scathing, and this is understandable, because Dr. Babkin knew Bechterov personally as an unsatisfactory guide to scientific endeavour before Babkin came under Pavlov's influence.

In the second half of the book the three main aspects of Pavlov's physiological contributions—regulation of the circulation, the work of the digestive glands, and conditioned reflexes—are considered in more detail. The range and depth of Pavlov's enquiries are impressive.

This book should be widely read by all those interested in the fundamentals of biological science. It also has special merit as the work of a liberal scientist who has seriously considered the position of science in culture, and is writing of the man who obviously moulded his own thought deeply; both men were also indelibly Russian.


This supplement to the Acta Psychiatrica et Neurologica maintains its usual high standard of typography and general layout. It is based on the study of 897 cases of epilepsy seen in neurological practice in Stockholm. Earlier chapters deal briefly with types of attack, prognosis and treatment, and cases are grouped aetologically under the three headings "cause unknown", "probably known", and "certainly known". The author makes a special plea for this classification rather than that of idiopathic and symptomatic, though it is doubtful whether he makes a very strong case. As far as mental changes and the epileptic personality are concerned, he finds that such traits are common among those cases we would call "symptomatic", and especially in post-traumatic cases. He remarks here that the attempt to force the psychopathological symptoms into a few types of personality is a failure; "the application of elaborate clichés to a large number of patients is a violation of the actual facts"—and many specialists working with epileptics would agree with this statement. In a chapter on social aspects, the view of epileptic criminality is largely discounted. The chapter on genetic factors is a long and important one. His figures seem to suggest that in Sweden, at any rate, the incidence of epilepsy in relatives of epileptics is no larger than it is among the general population, and the family histories of idiopathics and psychoses seem also to be no greater. The Swedish laws forbidding marriage to epileptics of "constitutional" type are reviewed and criticized. This book is certainly worth the attention of all those working on epilepsy.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Review in a later issue is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.)


*Reviewed in this issue.
BOOK REVIEWS


* Reviewed in this issue.


THE MAY (1951) ISSUE

The May (1951) issue contains the following papers:


Neuromuscular Disorders Amenable to Wheat Germ Oil Therapy. By Reuben Rabinovitch, William C. Gibson, and Donald McEachern.


The Surgical Treatment of Extrapyramidal Diseases. By Paul C. Bucy.

Disabilities and Progress in a Dysphasic University Student. By M. B. Elvin and R. C. Oldfield.

A Case of Gustatory Sweating. By H. I. Tankel.

Spinal Meningitis Due to Actinomyces Bovis Treated with Penicillin and Streptomycin. By Colin Edwards, W. A. Elliott, and Keith J. Randall.


A number of copies are still available and may be obtained from the Publishing Manager, British Medical Association, Tavistock Square, W.C.1, price 7s. 6d.