Judging by the references at the end of the account of polynевritis of pregnancy (p. 644) this condition may be disappearing in America as it is in this country; all four references are 30 years old. Diabetic polynевritis (p. 645) continues to be attributed to inadequate control of diabetes despite much evidence to the contrary. The slight reference (nine lines) to the carpal tunnel syndrome (p. 393) must still puzzle neurologists who believe it to be one of the commonest forms of 'neuritis' in the adult female. It is not mentioned in the differential diagnosis of the less common syndrome of cervical rib which takes up three pages.

Successful as this textbook of neurology has obviously been, it is, like many textbooks, more a source of information than a practical guide to the student and practitioner.

J. D. SPILLANE

HANDBUCH DER EXPERIMENTELLEN PHARMAKOLOGIE Band 15. Cholinesterases and Anticholinesterase Agents. Sub-edited by George B. Koelle. (Pp. viii + 1220; 176 figures. DM 298.–) Berlin: Springer-Verlag. 1963. This is an important book, written in English. The title might suggest that it is of little interest to neurologists. In fact it is a most valuable work of reference on all aspects of transmission at the neuromuscular junction and other cholinergic synapses. The aim of the volume is to provide a ready inclusive source of established information, defining areas where further studies are indicated, and in preventing unnecessary duplication of past work", and this is admirably achieved. The 24 chapters by an international team of experts are grouped into four sections: 1 Components of cholinergic systems. 2 Chemical classification and biochemical reactions of the anticholinesterase agents. 3 Systematic pharmacology, and 4 Toxicology and therapeutic applications of the anticholinesterase agents.

The themes are treated in a systematic manner which makes it easy to find the information required despite the very detailed presentation. The medical writer who can rarely find space to present his full evidence may be impatient of the detail essential to the chemist. Perhaps 'the medical literature would be less overwhelmed with the evanescent if details rather than opinions had to be presented for scrutiny and references were less limited. This book does both and does not confine its viewpoint to man, or even to the mammal. Where there is a major controversy both arguments are presented. Nachmannsohn fully restates his reasons for assigning to acetylcholine a role in the conduction of the nerve impulse. The opposing view, at present held by the majority, is presented more briefly but effectively.

Duplication is inevitable in a work of this nature but it is not excessive and is confined to what is necessary to make each chapter a self-sufficient essay. Cross-references are good and the index is adequate. The book is well produced, misprints are few, and conventions of nomenclature are consistent throughout (though chemists and clinicians might not agree on the spelling of ambenonium). Grob gives an excellent account of his views on the nature and treatment of myasthenia gravis. The reviewer is less enthusiastic about the value of oximes in the treatment of neostigmine intoxication.

Neurologists will hope to have this excellent book available in a reference library but toxicologists and workers in pest control or chemical warfare will want to own the book for frequent use. Its considerable price represents good value in view of its size, equivalent to three or four normal monographs.

A PHARMACOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE BRAIN FROM ITS INNER AND OUTER SURFACE By W. Feldberg. (Pp. 128; 52 figures. 18s.) London: Arnold. 1963. Professor Feldberg's original and fruitful studies of the pharmacological effects of agents perfused through the ventricular system of the cat are now widely known. This little volume introduces this work to the non-specialist clinician who will be not only interested in its potential clinical applications, but also intrigued by the apparent simplicity of the ingenious procedures which are described. The local application of chemical agents to the structures of the central nervous system may, if work such as the present is properly followed up, become a commonplace in neurological therapeutics.

THE RECOVERY FROM POLIOMYELITIS By Martin Singer and Peter Rose-Innes. (Pp. vi + 106; 30 figures; 17 tables. 25s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1963. The epidemics of poliomyelitis during the last 20 years that preceded the introduction of vaccination stimulated research into the pathogenesis of paralysis and deformity in poliomyelitis and produced some important changes in methods of management. Now that currents of thought have steadied towards common methods of management in most centres in the world, it is appropriate that a book should be produced that summarizes what has been learned and what can now be accepted as correct and useful in modern treatment of the disease. Although the fluency of the writing may be open to criticism, the authors have done well to compress so much useful information into so short a space.

Chapters on neuronal injury and muscle recovery summarize adequately the findings of research in these subjects in recent years. The brief chapter on deformity, however, is rather confusing. Subsequent chapters on the management of the recovery period are based on the author's own experience. Some good illustrations of simple and inexpensive apparatus could be particularly useful to anyone faced with an epidemic of poliomyelitis but with inadequate primary facilities for treatment.

Any book on poliomyelitis has to meet the challenge of describing treatment for the condition that may result in paralysis of any degree in any part of the body. Too often, the result is either a generalization of no practical value or a welter of practical details based on no particular principles. The authors have tried to steer a course between these two extremes and it is to their credit that they have done so reasonably successfully.

RECOVERY FROM EARLY BLINDNESS E.P.S. Monograph. No. 2. By Richard L. Gregory and Joan G. Wallace. (Pp. vi + 46; 15 figures. 20s.) Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd. 1963. The restoration of vision to one who has been blind from
Book reviews

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In this second edition of 'Neurochemistry', 42 contributors are successful in ranging widely over the whole field and each has presented his subject afresh. Some of the chapters are exhaustive reviews while others are concerned with aspects which are the particular province of the writer. This wide variation between chapters is paralleled therefore by variation in interest which different parts of the book will have for different readers. Histochernistry, blood flow, biochemical aspects of neural tissue metabolism, pharmacological reactions, and hereditary problems are discussed along with many other subjects. When so many aspects of this field are growing so rapidly this book offers a mine of information and reference for the non-specialist and an opportunity for orientation for the specialist.


Published proceedings of symposia tend to resemble the curate's egg, but this one is good in more parts than usual. It provides a well-selected set of stimuli to look more closely at a variety of very active lines of research, including the electrophysiology of conditioned reflexes, the possible role of ribonucleic acid in memory storage, and applications of information theory to ecological distributions. Anybody who dislikes having his mental fibres stretched should avoid this book. Others are bound to find it rewarding.


Written in the great French tradition of clinical observation in neurology, Professor Thiers now publishes an amplified version of a thesis first submitted by him in 1915, yet which strikes the reader as in no way out of date in 1963. Beginning with a precise account of the principles of cerebellar physiology, he proceeds clearly to define the varieties of cerebellum disorders in disease. The English readers of this book will be rewarded by some insight into a tradition of neurological observations as impressive and fruitful as that on which he customarily relies.

This popular German textbook now appears in its seventh edition. A concise, yet adequately detailed account of the major neurological conditions is illustrated by numerous small but well-chosen photographs. Too austerely written for fire-side reading, it constitutes a useful work of reference of manageable dimensions.


The idea of this book is to select from the literature classical (typical) cases of various syndromes and to quote their original description with a commentary, thus providing material for teaching. Its title might mislead because it does not contain classical historical descriptions of neurological diseases such as Major's book did for general medical conditions, though some would just qualify as this. This method of collecting teaching material presumably stems in part from a paucity of personal case material. It seems to have no advantage over careful selection and presentation of cases seen in current practice, and has the disadvantage that single cases are usually atypical and early cases, i.e., those first used to define a syndrome, often omit what is later known to be an essential part of the condition. It has the advantage of post-mortem confirmation in every quoted case.


As Dr. Wyke points out in the preface to this monograph, it is a commonplace to hear of various physiological and pathological states being attributed to the effects of changes in the hydrogen ion concentration of the blood on one or other part of the central nervous system. And yet when one looks for chapter and verse to substantiate such statements it is often hard to come by. This book fills a real gap in providing a detailed account of the neurological effects of changes in hydrogen ion concentration. The author has handled a wealth of data in a systematic and well-arranged fashion. There are a number of useful figures, and it is a pleasure, all too rarely encountered in many books, to find detailed legends that succeed in setting out quite clearly what the charts and graphs are showing and under what conditions the measurements were made. There is a good bibliography, and a subject index of 40 pages. It is a book that can be widely recommended, and it is only a pity that it has been given a title which is misleading in that it is too all-embracing and does not pinpoint, as the subtitle does, what the book is really about.


In this excellent and well-illustrated book the subject is critically examined as a whole and is based on the author's unique experience. Pulmonary fat embolism is shown to be a frequent pathological complication of bone trauma but, even when massive, is not of clinical importance. Subsequent cerebral embolism is advanced as the principal explanation for the various clinical syndromes in which those with coma have a poor prognosis. In clinical diagnosis the author stresses the value of petechiae (fat emboli) in the skin but warns of their absence in fulminating and partial syndromes. In pathological diagnosis he states the stringent criteria to be observed for the unequivocal identification of fat emboli in biopsy and necropsy material. He also describes the frequency of emboli in various organs and discusses their clinical and medico-legal significance. This book should be read by all concerned in the pathology and treatment of trauma.


This book is written to aid in the training of the head and neck surgeon, who has no exact counterpart in the United Kingdom. The subjects discussed range from thyroidectomy to endarterectomy for carotid stenosis, from repair of facial defects with a tube pedicle graft to surgery for an extradural haematoma.

In spite of its 352 pages this is a short book, for about half of it is made up of very successful operation diagrams. The text is concise and clear and, although open to occasional criticism, it is remarkably complete.

This is an interesting and useful handbook for the young surgeon. It will serve as a basis for revision during preparation for higher qualifications. Moreover, it will be of value in a library for hospital residents where those in training can turn to it for enlightenment concerning operations at which they are shortly to assist.


Not long after its first appearance, Professor Illingworth's book has come out in a second revised and amplified edition. This indicates the demand for a volume which gathers together and clearly expounds basic knowledge of normal and disturbed development in children. Far more than textbooks of conventional type, this book provides a basis for rational paediatric practice both in the physical and the psychological sphere.


This, the latest monograph in a long and distinguished series, reports the findings of clinical and family investigations based on patients admitted to the two largest mental hospitals in Stockholm between 1935 and 1950. There are several series of patients grouped by sex in each hospital and over different periods of time in the sexes. Family investigations were almost entirely of those
with at least one member living in or near Stockholm. The authors use Roth’s classification of the senile deteriorations as a basis, but do not adopt precisely the same terms. For example, for Roth’s ‘senile psychosis’ they substitute ‘progressive senile dementia’. They group their cases as: I Senile dementia extensively studied and followed up; II the same with shorter observation; III cases with associated arterio-sclerosis. An inevitable result of so many series defined by selection and clinical grouping is that tables of data are very complex and textural distribution of more contains hypothesis. There are elaborate analyses of age and sex specific mortalities, and of geographic and socio-economic distribution of cases in Sweden. The authors conclude that there is definite evidence for genetical predisposition but are unable to support any specific genetical hypothesis.

This book is long-winded and difficult to read but it contains more information on the pattern of distribution of these disorders in a community than has been presented in any previous publication.


‘Modern psychiatry is that branch of medicine which is concerned with the manifestations and treatments of the disordered functioning of personality which affect either the individual’s subjective life or his relations with others as well as his capacity to adapt to life in society. Psychiatry is directed, as well, to the origins and dynamic interactions of the personality which contribute to the development of mental disease.’ With these two opening sentences the authors of this well-known American textbook, now in its sixth edition and very reasonably priced, declare a position which they proceed to consolidate in three early chapters devoted to dynamic psychiatry, personality development, and adaptive processes and mental mechanisms. On this basis they build up a clear, comprehensive and up-to-date account of clinical psychiatry which includes a useful chapter on psychotherapy, a welcome section on the emotional consequences of physical disease, illustrative case histories, four E.F.G. records, and a large bibliography selected principally from post-war American sources.

Perhaps the principal appeal of such a text to students lies in its lack of equivocation. There are very few loose ends, very little discussion of what should be presented as controversial opinions. The psychoses, for example, are classified as disorders of psychogenic origin inasmuch as ‘...they represent the result of symbolic and interpersonal factors acting on the organism.’ Involutional depression, which ‘...undoubtedly evolves out of a marked neurosis of earlier life,’ is ‘...no longer considered to be a modified manic-depressive reaction occurring at a particular physiological epoch.’ And in another chapter: ‘The psychoneuroses are more frequent in women than in men, partly because of the fact that a more rigid repression of basic biological needs and instincts is required of women, with the result that anxiety defences in the form of neurotic symptoms are more frequently required than in men.’ The student who accepts such misleading views is unlikely either to question their underlying assumptions or to appreciate the old, well-tried doubts which continue to stimulate the research necessary for establishing the scientific foundations of psychiatry. The price paid for certainty is too high.

SCHIZOPHRENIA: CHEMISTRY, METABOLISM AND TREATMENT

Though it includes a brief general introduction and a five-page chapter on the chemical aspects of treatment, Dr. Smythies’ little book is essentially a competent survey of the more recent studies of schizophrenic metabolism and the model psychoses. So large is the growing volume of experimental work on this topic that the author has been compelled to provide as an addendum a summary of investigations which appeared between the completion of his galleys and page proofs. The results of some studies are already challenged by this later work; how much of the remainder will stand up to confirmatory experiment remains questionable in this fashionable but confusing field of inquiry.


The sixth volume of Dr. Koch’s seven-decker omnibus is concerned almost wholly with social aspects of psychology. The only chapters of any conceivable interest to neurologists are those by Dr. David French on cultural determinants of perception and Dr. C. E. Osgood on psycholinguistics. The well-known syndrome of logorrhea, paraphasia, and jargon, to which sociological writers are unfortunately so prone, is less in evidence than might have been feared.

GESAMMELTE SCHRIFTEN ZUR PSYCHOPATHOLOGIE

The recent appearance of Karl Jaspers’ ‘General psychopathology’ in an English translation has done much to create interest in his very distinguished work. The present volume of selected writings, originally published between 1909 and 1913, includes a penetrating study of illusions and hallucinations and a critical analysis of intelligence testing and the concept of dementia. A short paper on phenomenological analysis foreshadows the author’s later interests.

ELEMENTS OF PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

‘Psycho-analytic investigation’, according to Dr. Bion, ‘formulates premises that are as distinct from those of ordinary science as are the premises of philosophy or theology’. He discusses these premises and their implications in a way which will appeal to non-psychoanalysts who enjoy philosophical or theological logic. The

So much material, neurophysiological, behavioural and clinical, having a more or less direct bearing on the central problems of normal and disordered behaviour and its cerebral control, now pours from research centres that many people must feel the need to have some opportunity of sitting back and digesting it. This book provides such an opportunity. Not everybody will agree with some features of the general picture which emerges or with some of the particular emphases suggested. But the authors have sought a large perspective and accepted evidence from a wide catchment area. It is a book capable of stimulating a variety of readers each to his own thoughts.

Hallucinogenic Drugs and their Psychoterapeutic Use. Edited by Richard Crocket, R. A. Sandison, and Alexander Walk. (Pp. xii + 192; 19 illustrations: 35s.) London: H. K. Lewis & Co. Ltd. 1963. This book brings together a series of papers and their discussions read to a meeting of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association. It follows the unfortunate modern trend of reporting discussion verbatim. It is consistently verbose, tends to be repetitive, and is sometimes diffuse. Despite these shortcomings it contains a core of useful material. It is a pity that many who would read a pruned and edited version will not read this. Its main theme is the place of hallucinogenic drugs (mescaline, L.S.D., and related compounds) in psychiatric treatment. This still seems to be controversial. There is a short final discussion by laymen on the significance of hallucinated experience. The chief use of this book will be as a reference source for work in progress in this field: as such it may tend to be ephemeral.

Electrical and Drug Treatments in Psychiatry. By A. Spencer Paterson. (Pp. xii + 248. Illustrated. 65s.) London and Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Co. Ltd. 1963. This book consists of a somewhat rambling account of the two most widely used forms of physical treatment in psychiatry. The review is accompanied by personal comments and judgments and by clinical illustrations. Most of the material is readily accessible elsewhere and the author's opinions are neither original nor stimulating enough to justify another publication on this well-worn theme.


A perceptive social observer has recently emphasized that "... it is easier to put up a clinic than pull down a slum". This carefully designed study demonstrates that it is easier to pull down a slum than to evaluate what has been achieved in the process. Favoured by local circumstances in the city of Baltimore the authors set out to assess the relevance of the quality of housing to morbidity, selected behaviour and attitudes, psychological state, and performance at school. They were able to interview several hundred Negro slum families and then to organize regular follow-up assessments over the ensuing three years of not only a group of 300 families who moved to superior accommodation but also matched controls whose housing remained unchanged during the triennium. Though on the whole the differences on most indices were not dramatic they did provide some evidence in favour of the re-housed groups. Some social planners may object that half a million dollars were spent to establish the obvious. Nonetheless, it is through more work of this type that the rational foundations of the applied social sciences will be laid.

Books Received


AUF DEM WEGE ZU EINER ANTHROPOLOGISCHEN PSYCHIATRIE. BY Jürg Zutt. (PP. viii + 570; 6 figures. DM. 48.-) BERLIN: SPRINGER-VERLAG. 1963.


Mental Subnormality. By W. A. Heaton-Ward. (Pp. 88. 7s. 6d.) Bristol: John Wright & Sons. 1963.


Spanish-Portuguese Society of Neurosurgery.

The sixteenth annual meeting of the Spanish-Portuguese Society of Neurosurgery will take place in Valencia from 29 to 31 May 1964. Further information can be obtained from Professor J. J. Barcia Goyanes, Marques de Turia 62, Valencia.