

ADVANCES AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS IN NEUROSURGERY Edited by H. Krayenbuhl. (Pp. 210; illustrated; DM 79.) Springer: Wien. 1974.

This is the first in a proposed series of volumes to present important recent advances in neurosurgery and in related areas. It is to be a combined European exercise and all the contributions will be in English. The reasons given, which amply justify the production of such a series, are (1) the lack of any organized common European postgraduate training system for young neurosurgeons, and (2) the language barriers, which impede the exchange of neurosurgical findings in Europe more than in other parts of the world. The editors are neurosurgeons of the highest reputation and in addition are all experienced and skilled in teaching techniques. It is intended that all contributions will be submitted to the entire editorial board before publication of any volume, and in the first volume this plan has resulted in a very high standard of treatment of the chosen subjects. It is also intended that each volume will continue to consist of two parts, as indicated in the title—the first dealing with neurosurgical knowledge, and the second giving detailed accounts of technical procedures. On this occasion the first part consists of contributions on the following topics: (1) non-operative management of intracranial hypertension; (2) chronic adult hydrocephalus; (3) surgery of craniostenosis in advanced cases; (4) extradural haematoma.

The two papers on technique are on supratentorial craniotomy and on the removal of extramedullary benign spinal cord tumours.

This is a beautifully produced volume, with an extensive and up-to-date bibliography and well represented diagrams and radiographs. It can be recommended confidently as a reliable source of information for neurosurgeons and trainees alike, and one anticipates with pleasure the appearance of subsequent volumes in this series.

JOHN HANKINSON

DISORDERS OF THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM By R. H. Johnson and D. M. K. Spalding. (Pp. 300; illustrated; £6.50.) Blackwell: Oxford. 1974.

The appearance of this volume will rightly be welcomed by general physicians and neurologists alike. The authors, who have themselves made a distinguished contribution to research into autonomic disorders, have now provided a most thorough, scholarly and readable review of a field which is quite inadequately covered in most textbooks, perhaps excusably because progress in knowledge has been so rapid in the past few years. This is the reason why a fresh review was so badly needed. There are, of course, still unanswered questions—for example,

about the place of defects of renin release in idiopathic orthostatic hypotension, the role of sympathetic cholinergic fibres and possible adrenalin release in the mechanism of fainting, and the conundrum of causalgia. In the discussion of the treatment of idiopathic orthostatic hypotension, I would have suggested a higher place for postural retraining, including sleeping erect, in order to make use of residual sympathetic vasoconstrictor reflexes which in some cases can return disabled patients to modest activity without the use of vasoconstrictor drugs. All in all, this book represents a very solid achievement and can hardly be too highly recommended.

CEREBRAL VASCULAR DISEASE: 6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE SALZBURG 1972 Edited by J. S. Meyer, H. Lechner, M. Reivich, and O. Eichhorn. (Pp. 280; illustrated; DM42.) Thieme: Stuttgart. 1973.

The international conference held biennially in Salzburg is devoted to cerebral vascular disease, and brings together clinicians, physiologists, pathologists, and others in basic and applied sciences. It has deliberately been kept from growing too large, and has a predominantly European flavour with relatively few contributions from America and Asia.

In a round table meeting of this kind, the papers should serve primarily as a stimulus for discussion, and it is to be regretted that it has not been possible to include this in the published proceedings, as is done at the Princeton conference on a similar topic.

A further criticism of the 6th conference is the absence of any coherent theme. There are papers on all manner of topics, from biostatistics to normal pressure hydrocephalus, and from platelet aggregation to Doppler flowmeter, but none to link the findings together. There is a useful summary by J. S. Meyer, but one looks in vain for his conclusions or critical evaluation of the widely different contributions.

On the other hand, some of the papers are of a very high quality; particularly outstanding is that of Reivich and colleagues, on the relationship between blood flow and metabolism after middle cerebral artery occlusion in the baboon, and the clinical study of Held and colleagues on the subclavian steal syndrome. Many papers, however, deal with work which has subsequently appeared elsewhere, and not all are worth a second reading. One unusual feature of this conference is the inclusion of contributions from the Soviet Union which are not readily available to workers in the western world.

The proceedings are well-produced and illustrated by the German publishers and have appeared without excessive delay. There is also an index, a feature rarely found in publications of this kind.

On the whole, these meetings provide a useful summary of work in many parts of the world, and a sensible clinical orientation is emphasized throughout. The continued success of the practical exercise in international scientific collaboration at Salzburg is welcome, and reflects much credit on the industry and enthusiasm of the organizers.

W. ROSS RUSSELL

A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK OF PSYCHIATRY Edited by J. R. Novello. (Pp. 621; illustrated; £8.38.) Thomas: Springfield, Ill. 1974.

Printed in very large type and intended for psychiatrists as an 'immediate source of sound, practical information for use on the firing line' this bulky volume has been written by 19 authors, most of whom are residents or teachers in psychiatry at the University of Michigan Medical School. From a British reader's viewpoint it seems a strange hotch-potch, remarkable for its uncritically psychodynamic emphasis and for its paucity of information about psychiatric illness or research. The longest of its three parts, concerned with evaluation and some aspects of psychotherapeutic and physical treatment, consists largely of tabulated recommendations. In the chapter on general psychiatric evaluation, history-taking and examination receive a quarter of the space allocated to psychoanalytical assessment and characterization of ego function. Nine words relate to assessment of mood-state in the former section but 31 ego defenses are described in the latter. In other chapters, evaluation of drug abuse, sexual dysfunction, assessment for psychotherapy, and for transgender and cosmetic surgery are among topics which receive relatively detailed attention. Eleven systems of marital therapy are outlined. Some simple tables of differential diagnosis are included but mention of many psychiatric syndromes is limited to an abbreviated table derived from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM II)*.

The second part of the book concerns post-graduate education and lists training programmes, books popular with residents, and 100 'Journals and Periodicals of Interest to Psychiatrists'. The latter omits this journal and all journals of general medicine. The *British Journal of Psychiatry* is listed as a quarterly. Advice on preparing for board examinations includes the statement that for part 1 journal reading is not especially important 'and may be harmful'. The final section of 100 pages lists addresses of psychiatric organizations, hospitals, and residencies.

If, on his firing line, the reader consults the index for adaptive regression, bad trip, collaborative dyadic therapy, daytop village, escape precautions,

fantasy, gooseflesh, or holistic, help will be at hand. But if he searches for the following he will find himself unaided: anorexia nervosa, bereavement, (cerebral) tumour or neoplasm, epidemiology, dyskinesia, frontal lobe, Ganser's syndrome, genetics, head injury.

MENTAL RETARDATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES Vol. 6. Edited by J. Wortis. (Pp. 305; illustrated; £7.50.) Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1974.

The scope of these volumes, the first of which appeared in 1970, has naturally increased enormously with the growing knowledge of mental handicap in its widest sense. Following an introduction by Wortis, are three chapters on clinical aspects (Kirman), genetics and intelligence (Anderson), and hydrocephaly (Dignan and Warkany). Developmental biochemistry is discussed by Himwich and Agrawal.

A knowledgeable survey is provided of the work undertaken in each type of section and a comprehensive list of references is given. The chapter on sociology is less well presented, being at times difficult to follow, but this is compensated for by an excellent paper on physical education (with 120 references) which would be worth reprinting for every mental hospital. A chapter on language is controversial, and shows a lack of awareness of British work.

On the whole, this book is probably of more value to the reader who is already fairly well versed in mental retardation, than to those with little, or no knowledge of this field. However, both types of reader should find it a useful reference book, and the editor is to be congratulated on the contents of his latest volume, which can be well recommended.

RONALD C. MACGILLIVRAY

E.E.G. TECHNOLOGY 2nd edn By R. Cooper, J. W. Osselton, and J. C. Shaw. (Pp. 272; illustrated; £4.80.) Butterworths: London. 1974.

This book, the second edition of an already well-established and highly respected textbook, needs no introduction to those engaged in the field of neurophysiology. It is considered invaluable to both technicians and clinical electroencephalographers. The text, punctuated with numerous illustrations, covers concisely all current aspects of the origin, amplification and recording techniques of the electrical activity of the brain in particular, but with special reference to other physiological signals. The chapter on methods of EEG signal analysis has been extensively revised in this edition, and presents a practical review of this complex subject.

ANNE P. MCGEORGE



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