THE MICROSCOPICAL ANATOMY OF TUMOURS OF THE CENTRAL AND PERIPHERAL NERVOUS SYSTEM By Pio Del Rio-Hortega. Translated by Anselmo Pineda, Glenn V. Russell, and Kenneth M. Earle. (Pp. xiv + 246; 62 selected figures. \$9.50.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1962.

The publication of an English translation of Rio-Hortega's monograph on tumours of the nervous system has an assured welcome. Neuroanatomists, neurophysiologists, and neuropathologists will applaud this edition as a tribute to a distinguished pioneer whose patient work of outstanding originality forms part of the foundations of their speciality. In addition to this fitting recognition the present publication makes available to a wider public of pathologists and oncologists the bulk of Rio-Hortega's observations on tumours of the nervous system, observations based on the application to tumours of those silver staining techniques that were Hortega's special genius. Though much of Hortega's work has passed into current textbooks it is refreshing to read his original deliberations and to note where he took an independent line, which may yet prove fruitful.

The translation is into excellent contemporary prose and the selected figures amply justify their inclusion. The general format is most pleasing.

J. TREVOR HUGHES

MYELOGRAPHY By R. Shapiro. (Pp. 278; 236 figures. 82s.) Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers Inc.

A textbook devoted to the subject of myelography is long overdue. This volume, which runs to nearly 300 pages and contains over 200 illustrations, covers the subject well. A fairly adequate bibliography is appended at the end of the various chapters.

Over one-third of the book is devoted to the normal appearances both anatomical and radiographic, together with a description of artefacts. The subject matter is clearly presented and there are a number of good line drawings which help to clarify the descriptions.

The book might have been better entitled 'Positive contrast myelography' in that only passing reference is made to pneumomyelography. This is a little unfortunate as the latter method, which is practised in quite a number of centres, can be very rewarding if tomography is utilized.

One gets the impression that the emphasis on the various pathological aspects is a little unbalanced. More space might well have been devoted to tumours and perhaps a little less to intervertebral discs.

The last chapter is on 'discography', a technique whereby the intervertebral disc is injected with a fluid contrast substance. It must be admitted that 'pretty' radiographs result from this technique but the reviewer has yet to be convinced that the method has a practical application in surgery. One cannot help feeling that this is a technique whereby it is possible to convert a normal disc into a pathological one and the author himself draws attention to the potential danger of infection.

This book can be recommended to all specialists interested in the subject and it has the further merit of being relatively inexpensive.

JAMES BULL

FAT EMBOLISM By Simon Sevitt. (Pp. x + 233; 62 figures. 60s.) London: Butterworth. 1962.

This is a wholly admirable monograph on a subject which concerns orthopaedic surgeons and any others who may be involved in the treatment of injuries. As a pathologist to the Birmingham Accident Hospital, the author has had a vast experience of fat embolism in all its manifestations, and the record of his experience leaves little to be said. The main emphasis is on the pathological features, but there are good chapters on the clinical aspects, diagnosis, and treatment. The section on treatment begins with Skirving's statement in 1882 that 'treatment (is) of little avail . . . prophylaxis, as little handling of the injured parts as possible'. Dr. Sevitt says that little can be added to this, although supportive measures such as the administration of oxygen and antibiotics, and modern methods of managing the comatose patient (such as tracheostomy and control of fluid and electrolyte balance) may save some patients and improve the quality of survival in others.

J. PENNYBACKER

FRONTIERS IN BRAIN RESEARCH Edited by John D. French. (Pp. viii + 285; illustrated. \$9.00 (67s. 6d.).) New York and London: Columbia University Press. 1962.

This book contains a series of talks given at the opening of the Brain Research Institute of the University of California. The names of the contributors, which include Kety, Magoun, Percival Bailey, Gaddum, and Geoffrey Harris amongst others, suggests that the standard of these essays will be high. Harris's review of neuroendocrinology and its very wide ramifications is one amongst many excellent contributions. The book is enlivened by some pictures of earlier and famous neurologists. The book can be recommended as a short review of research activity on cerebral function in its wider sense.

DER MAGNESIUMSTOFFWECHSEL Physiologie und Klinik. By Siegfried Hänze. (Pp. viii + 96; 18 figures. DM. 15.-) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1962.

Magnesium metabolism has, until recent years, been a comparatively neglected topic, despite the indications from physiologists, enzymologists, and others of its importance in cell processes. The development of more satisfactory flame-photometric processes for the estimation of small amounts of magnesium in biological materials has, however, opened up the subject, and interest in it is now developing fast.

Dr. Hänze's small monograph is a useful compilation of much of the background information that we now possess about the part that magnesium plays in cell processes. It is divided into two main sections, the physiology of magnesium metabolism and the clinical aspects and applications. The first of these deals with the distribution of magnesium in the animal body, with its uptake, transport, and excretion, and with its importance in the cell. The second surveys briefly the syndrome of magnesium deficiency in animals and in man, and also the few available facts which we possess concerning disturbances of magnesium metabolism in different diseases.