Book reviews

CLINICAL NEUROLOGY 2nd ed. By Lord Brain (Pp. 400; 69 figures; 23 plates. 38s.) London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

The first edition of this book appeared in 1960 and was designed to present the essentials of neurology. The material is arranged in five parts: disorders of function, disorders of anatomical regions, infections, diffuse and systemic disorders, and psychological disorders, and is handled in orthodox fashion. This second edition has been brought up to date and there are new and revised illustrations.

The most obvious feature of the text is its clarity. In his definitions, introductory remarks, and in the description of clinical tests and their interpretation the author excels: 'Vertigo may be defined as the consciousness of disordered orientation of the body in space'. 'Speech is a mode of communication by means of sounds which stand for something which may be called their meaning'. 'Dystonia is a kind of frozen athetosis characterised by distorted posture of the limbs and trunk . . .'. Clarity of thought and expression require constant insistence by clinical teachers and an introductory training in neurology is valuable in sharpening the student's mind.

The preface does not mention the general practitioner and it is clear that the author is directing his attention to the needs of students and junior hospital staff. The practitioner needs the additional assistance of a practical guide to the many common nervous complaints he has to deal with.

Criticisms are mainly minor. Some of the references are scarcely suitable (for example, those on lesions of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth cranial nerves, and on cerebral diplegia). But how nice to see that one of the two papers offered for further reading on intracranial abscess should have come from the pen of a famous British cardiologist! Although many of the illustrations are an improvement on those of the first edition there are still some which may puzzle the reader. Figure 8, p. 33, depicts the third division of the trigeminal nerve supplying the upper two-thirds of the pinna. (Cunningham's and Gray's *Anatomy* differ here; clinical experience supports the latter.) Plate 9c does not show the standard postero-anterior projection of a normal encephalogram but a tilted modification. Plate 13a appears to be a ventriculogram not an encephalogram. The photographic lighting in Fig. 48, p. 274, illustrating ulnar nerve paralysis of the right hand, is such that the whole of the thenar eminence looks flattened. The value of Fig. 7, illustrating the action of the ocular muscles, is limited by an inadequate explanation in the text. (What confusion there is between the normal actions of the superior oblique muscle as described by anatomists and the consequences of paralysis as seen by neurologists and ophthalmologists.) Many more instructive clinical illustrations might be profitably added to Part I; the value of histological illustrations in a book of this sort is questionable.

No mention is made of the usefulness of serum creatine kinase estimation as a routine diagnostic test in clinical

and pre-clinical muscular dystrophy and in identification of female carriers of the responsible gene in the Duchenne variety. Nor is there a reminder of the danger of administering streptomycin-type antibiotics to patients with myasthenia; fatal paralysis may result from the blocking action on neuromuscular transmission. The old-fashioned and rather misleading classification of brain injuries into concussion, contusion, laceration, and compression is surprisingly retained. Post-traumatic epilepsy is insufficiently discussed. No mention is made of intravenous diphenylhydantoin in the treatment of status epilepticus.

While it is true that each generation of doctors should produce its own textbooks, in a subject like neurology there are essential basic data which will always have to be mastered. The reader will find in this book 'the hard intelligence' of neurology.

J. SPILLANE

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF NEUROBIOLOGY Vol. 6 By C. C. Pfeiffer and J. R. Smythies. (Pp. xi + 476; illustrated. 107s. 6d.) New York and London: Academic Press, Inc. 1964.

This annual publication, now in its sixth volume, presents extensive review articles on experimental work bearing on neural function over a wide range of levels of the evolutionary scale. These are intended for workers active in the relevant fields of inquiry, rather than for the general reader who may find these well-documented but highly detailed accounts difficult reading.

The present volume deals with neuronal protein metabolism (Lajtha), chordate muscle innervation (Bone), the cat's visual projection system (Meikle and Sprague), electrical events in the lateral geniculate nucleus (Bishop), regeneration in the central nervous system (Clemente), the action of Sernyl (Domino), and the effects of brain stimulation on free behaviour (Delgado). The last mentioned, longest and best written review, is of the greatest interest to neurologists, in that it presents a convincing account of the neural organization of behaviour. Evidence is provided for the separate representation of 'behaviour fragments', each a motor pattern with individuality and specialized organization which may be triggered in isolation by electrical stimulation. Complex behaviour is brought about by appropriate temporal programming of behaviour fragments giving rise to a combination of acts in appropriate sequence.

M. KINSBOURNE

FLUID AND ELECTROLYTES IN NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY By Burton L. Wise. (Pp. XVI + 117; 21 figures. \$6.00.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1965.

It is through no fault of the author that this is rather an unsatisfying book because, in the absence of definitely recognizable metabolic disorder, such as diabetes insipidus or dehydration, its subject is still rather an unsatisfactory one. The body's capacity to withstand the lesser degrees of metabolic derangement is perhaps underestimated; for 'the salt and water problem', which is

mainly what this book is about, is not commonly a serious one in neurosurgical patients, and only rarely is it encountered in those with head injury who receive water, salt, and sustenance on a basis only of sensible empiricism, helped by fluid-intake-output charts, electrolyte and urea estimations, and, above all, by a knowledge of the normal pattern of metabolic response to surgery and injury. Dr. Wise gives the sound warning that 'the administration of water to the post-operative patient is the factor most directly under the surgeon's control, and one that requires maximum caution', but he seems more reluctant than many of us are in this country to make an early change from the intravenous route to the more physiological one of the naso-gastric tube. We are left a little in the air during the chapters on hypo- and hypertonicity (these ambiguous words are, of course, used here in relation to natraemia and the osmolarity of the blood and not to neuromuscular activity). In practice, it may be very difficult to know how much importance to attach to the symptoms and signs attributed to these states, which can be clinically similar not only to one another but also to the underlying brain disorder, to blood circulatory dysfunction, and to post-operative 'cerebral oedema' which, to get back where we started, may itself be an effect of hypotonicity.

When Dr. Wise has had no experience of something, he says so, and this is refreshing; but it will perhaps disappoint neurosurgeons not to find more information about two of their more vexed problems. I should have liked to have seen much more about brain swelling, and had expected to be able to read the author's views on the place, if any, of steroids in the treatment of this complication; but space in this commendably concise book is precious, and I hope that we may have later from the same pen the critical and authoritative account which is badly needed. His book, however, is the only one of its kind, and neurosurgeons will be grateful that Dr. Wise has filled this gap in the literature of their speciality.

JOHN POTTER

PROGRESSIVE PARALYSIS By Wilhelm Zeh. (Pp. viii + 199; 20 figures, 5 tables. DM. 45.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1964.

Relatively little has in recent years been written on neurosyphilis. The monograph under review is welcome for its exhaustive treatment of general paralysis of the insane, not so much for the description of the clinical syndrome, which has been well documented, as for the wealth of information on the outcome of ancillary investigations during the course of the disease and its treatment. The author, Professor of Neurology at Bonn, in a final section develops psychophysical correlates into a psychiatric philosophy, a theoretical exercise of less interest to British readers.

M. KINSBOURNE

THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF MEDICINE, ANNUAL REVIEWS 1965. British Postgraduate Medical Federation. (Pp. ix + 344; illustrated. 40s.) University of London: The Athlone Press. 1965.

This volume reports 19 lectures delivered under the auspices of the British Postgraduate Medical Federation

during 1963 and 1964. These are thus authoritative reviews presented in a relatively simple form.

THE ESSENTIALS OF FORENSIC MEDICINE, 2nd ed. Revised. By C. J. Polson. (Pp. xvi + 600; 153 figures. 105s.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1965.

This textbook will be welcomed as an enlarged and improved second edition of a successful treatise on forensic medicine. Professor Polson, in his prefaces, declares that his primary aim was a text for medical undergraduates and for them, despite size and price, the book remains eminently suitable. It will also be of value to a much wider reading public including, despite the author's disclaimer, specialists in forensic medicine who will turn to this work for reference. The price reflects the size of the book and the number of the illustrations, most of which are excellent.

AN INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHIATRY, 3rd ed. By Max Valentine. (Pp. viii + 320. 24s.) Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 1965.

This small book is a good introduction to psychiatry, particularly as practised in the United Kingdom. It attends not only to the main clinical categories of psychiatric disorder, but also to the administrative and legal aspects of psychiatric practice which must impinge on almost all those engaged in psychiatry within the National Health Service. This is the third edition of the work in 10 years which speaks for itself. The present edition appears up to date both in its basic clinical thinking and in the legal and social implications of the Mental Health Act of 1959. Within its compass of 320 pages it covers briefly all the main aspects of psychiatry, and if readers pursue even a quarter of the references given to each chapter they will be well-informed about modern psychiatric thought. It concludes with a number of case interviews or case histories exemplifying typical clinical conditions. These are valuable practical additions; indeed, the whole work is essentially a practical manual. It can be recommended as an introduction for students and a useful stand-by for general practitioners.

PSYCHOSOMATIC RESEARCH A Collection of Papers By J. J. Groen and others. (Pp. x + 318; illustrated. 80s.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1964.

Psychosomatic medicine in one sense is all medicine. It is used increasingly in a specialized sense to mean the effect of emotion, especially chronic emotion, on states of bodily health. Even in this sense it is a major part of medical practice. The present volume reviews research in this field carried out largely in a centre in Amsterdam. It covers the three main fields of psychosomatic interest in the past decade or two: asthma, gastrointestinal disease, and cardiovascular, especially hypertensive, disease. To these are added some more theoretical papers.

The report of leucotomy and psychotherapy as a successful treatment for a case of essential hypertension with an adequately lengthy follow-up is of much theoretical and practical interest, especially in view of Russian reports of conditioning therapy in this condition.

The book is a valuable record of the work of a group largely inspired by Professor Groen, and can be recom-