modern techniques of neurological investigation and a convenient, though expensive, source of references for further reading.

J. A. SIMPSON

NEURO-CHIRURGIE INFANTILE By Marc-Richard Klein. (Pp. 456; 350 figures. 98Fr.) Paris: Editions Doin-Deren. 1966.

In writing a book on neurosurgery in childhood the author has tried to confine his material to disorders occurring principally at this period of life. The considerable overlap with adult neurosurgery emphasises, however, the artificial nature of classification of disease by age. Several excellent chapters devoted to pathophysiology, clinical examination, psychometry and anaesthetic problems in the very young have been contributed by his colleagues. Much of the information in these chapters, however, is part of the general knowledge of paediatrics and not particularly to neurosurgery. Many of the conditions occurring in infancy are well covered. The material on cranio-spinal anomalies is good and there is an excellent little section on dermal sinuses. Head injuries in the infant are dealt with adequately and he stresses the enlarging linear fracture, a relatively common occurrence seldom described in the neurosurgical literature, though few, perhaps, would agree with his suggestion that this is due to raised intracranial pressure.

This is a book based on personal experience in a paediatric neurosurgical unit in the Children's Hospital in Paris. It appears to be confined to this experience, there is no bibliography and on the few occasions when the work of other neurosurgeons is mentioned there are no references. This has resulted in considerable gaps in coverage. The section on pineal tumours, for instance, is based on five cases. No mention is made of precocious puberty, of spread through the third ventricle, of spinal metastases or the varieties of operative technique necessary. Spina bifida in some of its forms is well described but diastematomyelia and the associated dermoid tumours get scant attention. This detracts a great deal from the value of the book, I would doubt if a work confined to personal experience is ever justified.

There is throughout the book a slightly 'dated' appearance and this is because there is little in it of the newer techniques and concepts of neurosurgery. The classification of glial tumours is not the modern one. The pilocytic astrocytoma, for instance, is still called a spongioblastoma polare and no mention is made of proptosis in this condition; another result, perhaps of limited personal experience. Few would agree with his concept of the aetiology of infantile hydrocephalus, 'les plus nombreuses nous semblent relever d'une hypersecretion', though he does agree that ventriculo-venous shunts are more effective than coagulation of the choroid plexuses. No mention is made of modern stereotactic surgery in the control of involuntary movements, epilepsy and spasticity.

The general production of the book is good but there is no bibliography and no index. The illustrations as, alas, with so many French books, are of poor standard and the x-ray reproductions, which form the majority, are of such

bad contrast that the abnormalities can hardly be made out even with the aid of the captions.

Most neurosurgeons concerned with children will want to glance through this book but they will find little in it that is new. Most will feel, like your reviewer, that the content hardly justified the effort to read in detail in a foreign language.

● BRODIE HUGHES

HIGHER CORTICAL FUNCTIONS IN MAN By Aleksandr Romanovich Luria. (Pp. xvi + 513; 117 figures. 126s.). London: Tavistock Publications. 1966.

Professor Luria explicitly defines the framework of reference for his latest book: he is concerned with selective psychological deficit following focal lesions in the left hemisphere, and omits discussion of the sequelae of right hemisphere lesions and of the more general disorders of function which may ensue from cerebral insult. Within that context, he supplies a wealth of clinical observation which could stimulate neuropsychological research.

In the first section of the book, he reviews the vexed problem of localization of function and postulates a more refined approach which allows for selective impairment at different stages of a process which nevertheless depends on the integrated activity of the brain as a whole.

Analyses of disorders of language, visual spatial ability, and motor movement are related to the Pavlovian concept of special analyser systems, located in the temporal occipito-parietal and sensorimotor regions of the brain. The physiological basis for these theoretical concepts has yet to be established but they do at least provide a coherent grammar for the observation and interpretation of disordered function.

The third part of the book is concerned with the techniques used by Luria and his colleagues to explore these disorders. The section on voluntary movement and the comparison between acousticognostic language defects and kinetic motor aphasia are of special interest. The discussion of severe frontal lobe disease symptoms (the inertia, the failure to analyse a problem and to programme action; and the 'facile lapse into irrelevant connections (p. 285)'), based on long and intensive case studies, shows the quality of Luria's work. It remains for the experimental neuropsychologist to frame further hypotheses from these data and to submit to rigorous test some of the provocative and important speculations embedded in this text.

FREDA NEWCOMBE

PROGRESS IN NEUROLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY Vol. XX. Edited by E. A. Spiegel. (Pp. xiv + 783; \$17.50) New York and London: Grune and Stratton. 1965.

This important annual review has now completed twenty years of industrious documentation of a part of the neurological literature. It would be impossible to abstract each paper but the author searching for a bibliography will find adequate reference under classified headings and the titles of papers are given. As the majority of references are to studies in the basic sciences a less comprehensive but more critical review would be preferred by many clinicians. As a list of references the most serious deficiency is the virtual restriction to papers in the English