booklet gives a clear and concise account of the problem, and the discussion and conclusions are of interest to all who are involved in the care of the chronically disabled.

INGRID V. ALLEN

Perceptions and Presentations By Keith Oatley. (Pp. 247; illustrated; £7.00.) Methuen: London. 1978.

Although this book can be read as an interesting analysis of current theories and experiments in perception, it is very much more than that alone. The author has examined some of the fundamental problems in understanding the relationship between brain structure and psychological function, and his vehicle for doing this is the study of perception in which he draws attention to the often ignored yet still quite astonishing and theoretically tantalising ability of humans to make accurate perceptual judgments on the basis of the most fragmentary information.

There is a further and interesting theme to this book, as Dr Oatley gives a careful and critical account of the conceptual basis of current psychophysiology, and in so doing discusses the role of theory construction in guiding data interpretation, showing that interpretation of raw data can only proceed in the light of a current theory or hypotheses, which may well be implicit rather than explicit. He is much concerned with implicit models in psychophysiology, and he is very critical of the current S-R paradigm which in his view underlies much of current psychophysiological thinking, and which has not really changed since Descartes first suggested it as a mechanism of nerve function.

It is a little surprising that the book does not consider neuropsychological research, where the current models have often moved far away from Cartesian S-R psychology, to embody modern concepts of cognitive and engineering psychology. However, despite this, there is much in the book to interest scientists in psychological and physiological fields, and those with the philosophical bent will enjoy the discussion of the role of theory in data interpretation. It is a book to which one will almost certainly return, and although it is written as a highly integrated whole, each chapter can be read as a complete and stimulat-

ing unit. This is a most enjoyable book, and one that in these inflationary times would no longer be thought to be grossly expensive at £7.

D. NEIL BROOKS

Neurology of Childhood Learning Disorders Second edition By Richard J. Schain. (Pp. 156; illustrated; \$14.95.) Williams and Wilkins: Baltimore. 1977. This book aims to aid the neurological consultant—paediatric neurologist—who attempts to deal with learning disorders in childhood. There is much wisdom in the book, but I cannot in honesty recommend it either to a general audience or specifically to British readers, unless the reader is prepared to be selective and strictly critical. Within this small book are beautiful discussions of the neurological examination, management, and the place of drug therapy. But interwoven in the text are errors of fact, as in descriptions of seizure types, failure to clarify the neurological distinctions between specific learning disorders (such as “developmental Gerstmann syndrome” and “developmental dyslexia”), an attempt to cover too much ground, and a distortion of emphasis (so that a masklike facies is suggestive of a post-encephalitic state or Möbius syndrome, whereas in practice it is likely to be congenital myotonic dystrophy). Important omissions include the lack of mention of the need to measure parental head circumference when evaluating microcephaly or macrocephaly.

I am glad to have the book for its many good points, but if it should come to a third edition, a thorough pruning by a friendly but obsessional paediatric neurologist might allow a wider recommendation.

J. B. P. STEPHENSON

Anencephaly By R. J. Lemire, J. B. Beckwith, and J. Warkany. (Pp. 271; illustrated; \$27.00.) Raven Press: New York. 1978.

This monograph is devoted to the “master monstrosity”, the creation of a human without a brain. The authors suggest that, for reasons yet unknown, the rostral neural plate fails to close and thus the lesion originates in the first month of embryonic life.

After a historical introduction, anencephaly, both human and experimen-

tal, is reviewed in depth, combining the approaches of teratologist, paediatrician, neuroembryologist, and paediatric pathologist. Perhaps not surprisingly, there is little discussion of the clinical neurology, neurophysiology, or neurochemistry. Now that alphafetoprotein screening can drastically reduce the incidence of anencephaly, some mention of ethical considerations would not have been out of place. In the future, studies of the neurotransmitter system development in anencephalic abortuses may enlighten our knowledge of the normal development of such systems. Meanwhile this book will find a place on the shelves of interested paediatric pathologists, neuropathologists, obstetricians, neonatologists, and geneticists and in paediatric and radiological reference libraries. But the fearful should open it with care, and be thankful for alphafetoprotein.

J. B. P. STEPHENSON

Notices

The Second European Workshop on Pituitary Adenomas will be held in Paris from 20 to 22 September 1979. Further details may be obtained from Asclepios Convention Services, 6 rue de Penthievre, 75008 Paris, France.

The American Electroencephalographic Society invites young investigators to apply for its Hans Berger Award honouring the first scientist to describe the electrical activity of the human brain. The award consists of a cash honorarium, a plaque, and the opportunity to present the winning paper at the Society's 33rd Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, 19–21 September 1979. Original studies, performed by individuals no more than five years post-doctoral or three years post-residency, will be considered by the Berger Award Committee. Those wishing further information concerning eligibility, application requirements, and complete details of the Award, should write to: American EEG Society Executive Office, 3823 Glenn Avenue, Willoughby, Ohio 44094, USA. Telephone: (216) 942-9267.