BOOK REVIEWS


The twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the Groupement Belge d’Études oto-neuro-ophtalmologiques et neuro-chirurgicales has been marked by the publication of the proceedings of the meeting held in Brussels in September, 1950.

The theme of the session was a review of the vascular abnormalities affecting the central nervous system. The “Livre Jubilaire” contains nine excellent papers in which the clinical and pathological aspects of intracranial aneurysms and angiomas are discussed, and there is a section on the treatment of intracranial aneurysm. These are followed by a number of communications on the same subjects. Among the authors are some of the distinguished members of this society.

The majority of the illustrations are of an exceptionally fine quality and there are several good bibliographies. The volume provides a useful account of the subject.


This is an essay on fantasy, perception, and interpretation. The author makes a complicated distinction between fantasy or inspiration (Wahneinfall) on the one hand, and false interpretation of perceptions (Wahrnehmungswahn) on the other, and he maintains that false interpretation rather than perceptual disorder is at the basis of schizophrenia. He brings no new evidence to support his argument; nor does he suggest how interpretation comes to be disturbed in the schizophrenic psychosis.


In the introduction the author states his aim clearly: “this book deals with the mathematical theory and statistical methods used in interpreting test results”, but the actual contents might be more exactly described if the words “interpreting test results” were replaced by “manipulating normally distributed measures”.

Again, the author writes, “This book is written primarily for those working in test development”, and a student who is likely to become involved in large scale “objective” testing will indeed find interesting discussion, all the major techniques, many ingenious devices, and an extensive bibliography. On the other hand, practically everything which concerns the human being who takes a test is not within the scope of this book. The content or form of test items and all such contingencies as anxiety engendered by the examination, tensions at home or at school, recent removal from one town to another, or transient sickness lie outside the author’s field and their effects in test results are not considered.

It may be no criticism of the book or the author to say that it could only thrive in an atmosphere of mass production. The expenditure of effort required to produce a fully “standardized”, “reliable”, “objective” examination can only be recouped on enormous groups of candidates or by tests remaining in service over a term of years.

A reader who wishes to learn about theories of mental testing will not find them here. He may not indeed find them easily elsewhere, but there are a number of books, including some recently published such as “Mental Testing” by F. L. Goodenough or “Psychological Testing” by J. L. Mursell, which, though not dealing explicitly with theory, have much to say about the history, principles, and practice of the subject.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Review in a later issue is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.)


INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NEUROLOGY, 1953

The fifth international congress of neurology will be held in Lisbon from September 7 to 12, 1953. This will be followed by a meeting in Madrid to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of Ramón y Cajal.

The General Secretary of the Congress is Dr. Almeida Lima of Lisbon, and the National Committee for Great Britain will be: Vice-President, Dr. F. M. R. Walshe; Secretary, Mr. Harvey Jackson; Treasurer, Dr. Wm. Goody.

The Executive Committee selected three topics for the symposia of the Congress. Special attention will be paid to the neurosurgical aspects of these subjects. The subject of each symposium, and the persons entrusted with the preparation of the programme for these special topics are as follows: cerebro-vascular conditions (two sessions), Drs. Egas Moniz and Alajouanine; the parietal lobe, Dr. F. M. R. Walshe; metabolic diseases of the nervous system, Dr. L. van Bogaert.

Individual members of the Congress may take part in the discussion of one of these topics, provided application is made beforehand to the General Secretary, and a résumé of the proposed communication sent to him not later than February 1, 1953. Five minutes will be allowed for such a communication.

Afternoon sessions will be arranged for the presenta-

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Ablation of Abnormal Cortex in Cerebral Palsy. By Wilder Penfield.
The Efferent Fibres of the Hippocampus in the Monkey. By D. A. Simpson.
Chronic Neurological Disease as a Possible Form of Lead Poisoning. By E. J. Butler.

A number of copies are still available and may be obtained from the Publishing Manager, British Medical Association, Tavistock Square, W.C.1, price 12s. 6d.