BOOK REVIEWS

ANATOMIE CHIRURGICALE DU CRÂNE ET DE L’ENCEPHALE
(Surgical Anatomy of the Skull and the Brain)
Ch. Clavel and M. Latarjet
(G. Doin & Co., Paris. 1938. 200 fr.)

In the skull, more than in any other region of the human body, there exists a great discrepancy between the anatomical pictures encountered by the surgeon and the ones which are conveyed by the usual dissecting-room methods of teaching. A considerable imaginative effort is needed on the part of the student to construct in his mind the correct three-dimensional relationships as they exist in the living body. This difficulty has been fully taken into account in the present book, which comes to us from the Lyon schools of Anatomy and Surgery. The first part deals with general arrangements of cerebral blood vessels, cerebrospinal fluid pathways, and the disposition of the meninges, and serves as an introduction to the four parts of the book in which surgical anatomy of the intracranial regions is presented. The descriptions are based on operative exposures, and 151 illustrations serve to clarify the innate difficulties of the subject. The illustrations of ventricular and arterial injections with contrast media are particularly useful for an understanding of modern aids to neurological diagnosis, and in view of their great importance normal arteriograms and ventriculograms might have been dealt with even more fully. The addition of an alphabetical index in future editions would increase the value of the book.

The simple and precise language should present no difficulties, even to the reader whose knowledge of French is far from perfect. The authors have succeeded in presenting a very readable account of a complicated subject.

DIE INTRACRANIellen BLUTUNGEN BEI NEUGEBORENEN
(Intracranial Hæmorrhage in the New-Born)
Erwin Kehrer
(F. Enke, Stuttgart. 1939. R.M. 8.20)

Intracranial hæmorrhage is one of the chief dangers to the infant during parturition, and it is Professor Kehrer’s purpose to enumerate and to clarify the many details of its pathogenesis in order that others may understand how reduction of this peril to a minimum may be attained. In this ambition Professor Kehrer succeeds well. This small volume contains useful sections on diagnosis, prognosis, prophylaxis, morbid anatomy, and morbid physiology. Much of the information is not obtainable elsewhere, and the arrangement of the work is excellent. Neurologists, obstetricians, and general practitioners will find in this volume much interesting information and valuable advice. There is a large bibliography.

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COMPARATIVE ANATOMY AND PHYIO-PATHOLOGY OF THE AUTONOMIC HYPOTHALAMIC CENTRES

A. A. Boon

This monograph is presented in the form of four chapters preceded by a short introduction. A bibliography of over 17 pages is appended. The first two chapters are concerned with a general review of the main anatomical features of the hypothalamus and the comparative anatomy of this region. Here Dr. Boon presents his own studies in conjunction with the views of others; this sector is well worth reading. The third chapter discusses the probable division of the hypothalamus into ortho- and parasympathetic portions, a view which the author is inclined to support on the basis of reports on stimulation experiments of this region. The last chapter is devoted to the various physiological functions with which the hypothalamus is now crowded. It is doubtful whether the summaries presented in this portion would be considered adequate or critical by those particularly interested in the physiology of the hypothalamus. For instance, one is told that normal sleep is "a parasympathetic function," while the pathologic sleep and disturbances such as are seen in postencephalitic states are due to damage of ortho-sympathetic centres and may be regarded as "Ausfall" symptoms; all this on the basis of the division of the hypothalamus hypothesized before.

EFFECT OF CHRONIC VITAMIN E DEFICIENCY ON THE NERVOUS SYSTEM OF THE SKELETAL MUSCULATURE IN ADULT RATS

L. Einarson and A. Ringsted
(E. Munksgaard, Copenhagen. H. Milford, London. 1938)

This monograph of the two Danish authors gives the results of very careful investigations on the clinical symptoms and pathological findings from the nervous system in adult white rats fed on a diet deficient in vitamin E. The clinical symptoms were a disturbance in the gait with ataxia of the hind limbs; later paresis with marked muscular wasting and in some cases hyperaesthesia and hypalgesia. The administration of wheat germ oil could not cure the symptoms that had already appeared. In initial stages it could limit or check the progression, but later it had no effect on the development of the disease. The histological findings were degeneration of the posterior roots and posterior fasciculi, later of the anterior horn cells and their fibres, and in some cases of the pyramidal tracts. The changes in the atrophic muscles were characteristic of progressive muscular atrophy of spinal origin. The book is well illustrated.

HISTOLOGICAL TECHNIQUE FOR INTRACRANIAL TUMOURS

Dorothy S. Russell
(Oxford University Press, London. 1939. 7s. 6d.)

The book is useful to the technician who may be in doubt as to the selection of methods from a literature overloaded with alternatives. There is no intention of making the work anything more than the necessary minimum for neuropathological technique. The descriptions of methods are lucid and the general organization of the material is admirable.
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THE MORPHOLOGY OF THE BRACHIAL PLEXUS

Wilfred Harris
(Oxford University Press, London. 1939. 25s.)

This volume records the author's investigations into the different forms of the brachial plexus in all varieties of animals and birds, from Fishes to Man, begun in 1902 and continued until 1939, when opportunity offered of obtaining information on the Giant Panda. Despite considerable difficulty in the collection of specimens the series is now very inclusive. Thus specimens of Monotremes were hard to come by. They were of special importance as providing with those of reptiles links in the explanation of the apparent anomaly of the cutaneous supply of the median and ulnar nerves on the back of the hand and the motor supply of the ulnar to the dorsal interossei in man. In these Harris has shown that primarily dorsal fibres join the ventral branches of the inner cord. In the primates essentially dorsal fibres have joined the ventral cords. The book will be of importance first to the student of morphology. The neurologist will find interest in the functional aspects discussed, as for instance the influence of the length of neck and habits on the number of spinal nerves sharing in the supply and on their type of pre- and post-fixation. The structure and function of the pectoralis major are discussed at length. There are 87 illustrations.

HEREDITARY AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS IN THE CAUSATION OF MANIC-DEPRESSIVE PSYCHOSIS AND DEMENTIA PRÆCOX

H. M. Pollock, B. Malzberg, and R. G. Fuller
(State Hospital Press, New York. 1939. $2.50)

The authors are statisticians. Their material was the family history, personal history, and environment of patients with manic-depressive psychosis and dementia præcox, as reported by social workers. To determine whether hereditary factors operate in the causation of the disease they have compared the incidence of mental disease in the siblings and ancestors with the expectation of disease in the population of the same State which in earlier studies the authors had determined. Corrections are made for the increasing incidence of mental disease through the decades of the last half century and for chance of disease in the yet unaffected younger relatives. Apart, therefore, from the inaccuracies of history-taking and the assessment of the mental condition of ancestors, the basis of the comparison is sound, and errors of previous workers are avoided. In the case of manic-depressives they conclude that siblings have a greater expectation than is found in the general population. There is also a hierarchy. The highest incidence of mental disease is found among the female siblings of the female patients and the lowest is found among the male siblings of the male patients. It is suggested that the sex element enters into the transmission of manic-depressive psychosis. In dementia præcox, on the other hand, there appears to be a tendency for relatively more tainting in the families of the male patients. They find no evidence of Mendelian inheritance. While this analysis of hereditary factors is of great importance the contribution of the authors on environmental factors in these psychoses is not of comparable merit. They table and tot up such circumstances as financial stress, unhappy love-affairs, poor housing conditions, but fail to distinguish the facts which make a difference and are significant factors. They find that certain situations just prior to the breakdown appear significant, e.g. sex difficulties and marital infelicities, yet the reader is given no adequate psychiatric evaluation of their rôle—whether they are to be reckoned precipitating factors or merely earlier features of personality inadequacy or breakdown.
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PSYCHOTHERAPY, SCIENTIFIC AND RELIGIOUS

Marcus Gregory

(Macmillan, London. 1939. 21s.)

In this book the author, a priest of the Coptic Church, sets out to give a comprehensive account of the various theories and methods of modern psychotherapy, and compares them with Christ’s teaching and practice concerning mental healing.

After a preliminary survey of the different influences governing the incidence of health and disease, in which he emphasizes the constant interplay of psychical and physical factors, he describes magic healing as practised in the pre-Christian era and then devotes his longest chapter to a critical exposition of Christ’s methods of healing as reported in the Gospels. Here he stresses the fact that Christ did not regard disease as necessarily the result of sin, but that he realized the existence of a sense of guilt as a causative factor in disease, and often made it his first task to relieve the sufferer of his sense of sin. The author shows that in this respect Christ was in line with modern psychotherapeutic theory and practice, which traces many disorders of the body and mind to hidden feelings of guilt in connection with repressed unconscious wishes.

The author traces the evolution of modern psychotherapy from Mesmer onwards, and gives an objective account of the views and methods of healing of different schools of thought, mentioning especially the behaviouristic, the horman, and psycho-analytic schools, in which last he distinguishes carefully between the rival theories of Freud, Adler, and Jung. He discusses, further, hypnotism and suggestion as means of healing and shows the connection between suggestion and religious faith. He shows, also, how Christ in his healing intuitively made use of what psycho-analysts call the “transference” situation.

Finally the author pleads for a synthetic philosophy of living, and he states that the greatest need of the present day is a rethinking of the Christian faith in the light of modern discoveries about the human mind.

MODERN TREATMENT IN GENERAL PRACTICE

Year Book, 1939

Edited by Cecil P. G. Wakeley

(The Medical Press and Circular. 1939. 10s. 6d.)

The title of this book is by no means a guide to the contents which one might expect to find. Surprising inclusions are the operative treatment of auditory nerve tumours, of papilloma of the bladder, of pulmonary neoplasms, and the technique of splenectomy. Of course the book is extremely useful to general practitioners who wish to obtain a brief review of recent advances in therapy without troubling to sift a voluminous and often tedious literature. The printing and illustrations are excellent, but somehow the purpose of the book seems marred by the inclusion of specialized procedures and diagnoses which might have given way to greater detail in dealing with some of the commoner conditions ever before the practitioner’s eye.
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CRANIO-CEREBRAL INJURIES

Donald Munro

(Oxford University Press. Humphrey Milford, London. 1939. 21s.)

This book deals with the practical aspects of cranio-cerebral injuries. Following a chapter dealing in a concise and clear manner with the physiology of the cerebro-spinal fluid and blood circulation, the author states in the second chapter the important points in the history-taking and clinical examination of the case, and also indicates sources of error which may occur in evaluating the history. In criticising the degree of intracranial pressure attention is drawn to the necessity of knowing if the subject is in or is recovering from a state of surgical shock, and if the subject is in a dehydrated state. Consideration is then given to the X-ray findings and many illustrations are included. These, unfortunately, are not as satisfactory reproductions as one would have wished to see. Three important chapters are devoted to treatment and in them much sound advice is given regarding nursing, non-operative treatment, and surgical measures. Following these chapters are several dealing with complications, first-aid procedures, and statistics. This is an excellent book, thoroughly practical, and should be read by all who may have to deal with cranial injuries.