BOOK REVIEWS


This is a beautifully produced volume designed to aid the stereotaxic worker in his search for the location in space of intracerebral structures. This problem is rendered more difficult by the individual variation in these structures. Correlation between the location of subcortical structures and the cephalic index are presented, determining the spatial limits of any given individual structure in relation to standard cerebral planes. The limits can be derived from either graphs or equations given in the book, based upon statistical analysis of measurements of 21 subcortical structures in 14 subjects. The authors note, and one would agree, that it is surprising that meaningful conclusions can be drawn from a study of such a small series, but the validity of the deductions is based on Fisher’s work on the probabilities of small series analysis. The book in addition contains a useful atlas of drawn and photographed cerebral sections. A short review of the statistical theory upon which the work is based is helpful, and there is a useful anatomical catalogue and alphabetical index of anatomical structures. The work is particularly valuable as it is for general purposes and not designed for use with any one particular stereoecephalotome. The text is in both French and English.


There are not many textbooks on this subject and Bonnal, a neurosurgeon, and Légré, a radiologist, both from Marseilles, have covered the field well. The illustrations and line drawings are of a high quality, but it is unfortunate that all the radiographs are positives. However, this practice is by no means confined to French publications.

After introducing the subject by describing the technique, indications, and dangers of angiography, the authors outline the normal angiographic appearances, both of the carotid and vertebral trees. This is followed by the largest chapter, which is devoted to neoplasms. The other chapters concern aneurysms and angiomas, obliterative lesions of the main vessels, and finally a few miscellaneous conditions.

One is a little shocked by the illustrations in the chapter on technique. It seems that the protection of the operator and his assistants from ionizing radiation consists only in the use of a long connecting system between the injecting syringe and the intra-arterial needle. There is no suggestion of using lead-rubber protective screens.

The bibliography is adequate but not exhaustive. It is gratifying to find work quoted from a number of countries, but the large majority of references are continental European.

The book is to be recommended as one of the best of the recent publications on cerebral angiography.


This monograph contains the reports and discussions of the Second International Colloquium on Temporal Lobe Epilepsy held in 1957 at the U.S. National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland, under the leadership of Earl Walker and Henri Gastaut. It follows on the reports in the Acta Medica Belgica of the first colloquium which was held at Marseilles in 1954. Many contributors who are among the leaders in this field in north and south America and in Europe have taken part, and the volume consists of some 33 separate papers with the subsequent discussions. It has been arranged in four parts starting with the neuropathological and electrophysiological aspects, and thence progressing through neuropathology and neurochemistry before coming to the surgical aspects. The final section deals with the clinical and psychological effects of temporal lobe ablations both in man and in animals. Most of the reports are short and several are excellent, but it is inevitable that some papers overlap and that contrary views are given. Still, the monograph contains such a wealth of information that it is likely to be a reference book for those interested in epilepsy. The aspects in which the information is somewhat sparse concern the historical development of the concept of temporal lobe epilepsy, its treatment by anticonvulsant drugs and other medical regimes, and its importance in psychiatric practice.


This short monograph brings up for discussion the problems in the recognition and management of chronic subdural haematomas. It follows the Scandinavian custom of taking some 52 personal cases (43 chronic and nine acute subdural haematomas), and comparing their symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment with views expressed in the literature. The author propounds the view that his condition should not remain undiagnosed only
to be disclosed at some cranial exploration. Instead by a careful analysis of the symptoms supplemented by radiological examination, and in particular by carotid arteriography, all these lesions should be disclosed before operation, so that operation itself becomes definitive treatment and not an exploratory procedure. The author deals chiefly with chronic subdural haematomas in adults but also touches on haematomas of infancy. He gives a comprehensive survey of the literature, and draws our attention again to the condition without adding much new information.


This short monograph on Kinnier-Wilson’s disease provides a useful survey of the clinical manifestations of the condition. The authors review fully both the neurological and other findings in the disease. They summarize but do not critically assess modern knowledge of the biochemical background presumed to be the cause of the condition—the abnormalities of copper metabolism as represented by a reduced or absent copper-carrying protein, caeruloplasmin. They also mention treatment with B.A.L., chelating agents, and penicillamine and en passant by transfusion of the missing caeruloplasmin. None seems to have any but a temporary effect. The value of the book is in bringing together and reviewing the scattered literature both old and new on this subject and in comparing it with the author’s own clinical experience of the disease.


This short book, now in its second edition, is devoted mainly to a brief consideration of the anatomical and physiological background of pain. This it does reasonably well—especially in discussing the mechanism of headache, a subject on which the authors have done much original work. “Thalamic” or “central” pain is an important entity clinically because it is both distressing and intractable: but neither its description nor its possible physiological background are well covered. The description of referred pain is adequate but its possible mechanism is hardly discussed. The section on management of pain is rather disappointing: though the student can derive for himself some aspects of treatment from the anatomical and physiological considerations mentioned, little direct help is given to the clinician who has to deal with these cases.


The authors have written this book in two parts. In the first each chapter is devoted to one aspect of neuroophthalmology, visual fields, ocular movements, nystagmus, the pupils, the sensory innervation, and methods of examination. In the second part the effects on the eye of lesions in various parts of the nervous system and by various types of disorder are discussed. The whole is liberally and clearly illustrated, with colour plates where necessary, and the presentation is clear. The printing and paper are very good, but the binding could usefully be stronger.


In his introduction the author indicates how little we know regarding objective anxiety compared with our knowledge of neurotic anxiety. He then describes research he has conducted into effects of stress, the stressful situation being a surgical operation.

In the first half of the book the author describes and discusses the psychoanalytic sessions of a patient, who, in the course of psychoanalysis, had to have an operation on her leg. On the basis of these studies he puts forward a number of hypotheses and propositions dealing with the causes and consequences of various types of emotional reactions and adjustment mechanisms which are frequently activated when people are exposed to severe environmental dangers.

The second half of the book consists of a study of 22 patients undergoing operations, and also a survey by questionnaire of 150 Yale students regarding their experiences of operations they had had. Perhaps the most obvious conclusion that the author draws is that “informed” patients, patients who have had the nature of the operation explained to them, have less fear than the “uninformed”. They are also less likely to become emotionally disturbed post-operatively, showing this by breaking rules or getting angry. On the basis of these and other findings advice is given on the psychological preparation of patients for operation.


The author, well known for his psychiatric analysis of the relationship of body type and character, has investigated the biological laws, the motivations, and personality trends which might explain the creative powers of outstanding personalities referred to as Genius. Kretschmer’s biographical and psychoanalytical account of famous politicians, poets, scientists, and musicians is fascinating and instructive and should attract psychologists, psychiatrists, and the general reader interested in biographical sketches.


After the last war, there was a vast (and to judge from the data in these volumes, much needed) expansion of
psychiatric services in the United States. This necessitated the training of large numbers of psychiatrists and a large proportion were trained at the Menninger School of Psychiatry, said to be the largest training centre for psychiatry in the world. The selection of applicants for training was made a research project to determine the qualities desirable in a psychiatrist. Applicants were interviewed and were given intelligence tests, projection tests, and personality inventory tests. On the basis of these, attempts were made to ascertain the personality qualities required in a psychiatrist.

All this is very salutary and such a basis of selection may ultimately be preferable to the somewhat haphazard methods of selection used in this country. However, so far as practice in this country is concerned, this book contributes little of value. The emphasis throughout the book is on the superiority of psychotherapy: this attitude of the School must have played some part in the self-selection of applicants. We read, for example, that of the 238 residents in the series, 22% sought and received psychotherapeutic help, and an additional 43% sought treatment but did not get it. Only 35% of the residents apparently did not consider they needed psychotherapy. One must bear in mind that in this topsy-turvey world to be receiving psychotherapy was to have a certain social cachet. The attitude of the School is also revealed perhaps by the fact that the best residents (the steady highs) ended doing psychoanalysis; the poorest residents (the plodders and the incompetents) ended doing shock therapy. Even more revealing are the errata. There are 10 errata, seven of which consist in substituting "psychotherapeutic" for "psychiatric". This observation is offered gratis to psychopathologists of everyday life.


The third volume of "Recent Progress in Psychiatry", although published in 1959, covers the quinquennium 1950 to 1955. Despite the delay in publication, it is a valuable book to the psychiatric practitioner and postgraduate student. The period it covers was one of active development in several important fields; thus sections are devoted to subjects such as cybernetics, the organization and connexions of the hippocampal and intralaminar systems, and the enzy. 

matic basis of certain psychoses. At the same time there are serious omissions in the subjects represented. For instance, there is no chapter on the therapeutic use of drugs in psychiatry, a field in which major progress has been made in recent years.

The primary aim of most of the contributors has been an impartial and wide coverage of the scope of their subjects. In a book of this kind, which is chiefly intended as a source of reference, this is more important than an attempt at subjective evaluation, in which the writer is swayed by his own interests, giving an incomplete and possibly seriously prejudiced account of the advances made in his subject. This choice of approach has been faced squarely by the "Professor of Psychiatry, Institute of Psychiatry (Maudsley Hospital)" (sic) in the section entitled "Personality Tests: 1950-1955". Professor H. J. Eysenck admits frankly that the number of publications germane to this subject is so great that "any attempt at even reasonably complete coverage of different aspects would be quite impossible", and he reviews those trends which he himself considers to be the most important. The reader slightly acquainted with personality testing, a subject fraught with controversy, is left with the uneasy feeling that perhaps no bread would have been better than the half loaf.

This book would have been better for more economy in editing. For example, the same subject matter is covered competently and in considerable detail with respect to mongolism in the chapters on psychiatric genetics and mental deficiency. The individual authors cannot be blamed as in most cases they try to cover the full range of the subject they have been asked to review, and they succeed in doing this concisely and with clear definition.

Thus the chief faults of this book are deficiencies in overall planning and editing. The individual contributions are, for the most part, comprehensive, instructive, and enjoyable to read. On the whole it gives a clear picture of recent progress in the fields of psychiatry under review, and with the excellent bibliographies it contains it should prove an extremely useful book of reference.


Accounts of drug intoxications which mimic naturally-occurring psychoses are always of interest, because of their physiological implications and because they engender a little optimism over the prospects for therapy in the future. This study of the schizophrenia-like illness produced by amphetamine is concerned with 42 cases, and is a commendable addition to the Maudsley Monographs. It is based on a thesis for the M.D. and it is both informative and readable. The description of the clinical condition is excellent. The frequency of this intoxication makes it important in differential diagnosis. The prognosis is good if the addiction and source of supply of the drug can be discovered. The author produces a careful array of facts to show that amphetamine psychosis is not merely an exposure of pre-existing but concealed mental disorder. He is also most careful not to draw conclusions about the relationship between the drug-induced and natural illnesses.

The second part of the book is devoted to the evaluation of analytical methods which have obviously been of great service in confirming the diagnosis and in following the course of the addiction. There is no index.


This report was prepared by a small international
group of psychiatrists and others convened at Geneva in November, 1957, under the Chairmanship of Professor E. Lindemann, of the Harvard Medical School. Their terms of reference were to examine, in a preliminary way, the present state of knowledge—and ignorance—regarding the mode of action and effects of psychotropic drugs, and their current applications in psychiatry.

Although admittedly preliminary, this report does provide a useful and well-considered survey of a field in which it is particularly difficult for those standing outside it to distinguish fact from fashion. The authors have some interesting and useful things to say about the design and methodology of drug research and about the importance of racial and cultural factors in relation to psychiatric disorder and its treatment by physical methods. They also stress the obvious need for a clear and well-defined terminology.

In spite of the competence with which the authors of this report have done their work, it is clear that a great deal more basic research in neuropharmacology will have to be carried out before any very adequate rationale for the use of psychotropic drugs in psychiatry is likely to emerge.


Carbon dioxide therapy is used as a treatment for psychoneurosis, and consists in making the patient respire a gas containing a high proportion, say 30%, of carbon dioxide. This is continued until consciousness is lost, and is repeated at intervals. This book, a collaborative effort of members of the Carbon Dioxide Research Association, sets out to describe the theory and technique of treatment, and the clinical, physiological, and psychological consequences of its use. The treatment was inspired by the success of physical measures for the treatment of the psychoses. It seemed probable to Dr. Meduna that physical factors that affect the brain must also affect the mind (though he is disinclined to distinguish too sharply between brain and mind) and he tried first with various concentrations of carbon dioxide. There is now a considerable body of psychiatrists employing this treatment, and many of them report their experiences with illustrative case records, though it is difficult to assess the results of treatment in such patients without a prolonged controlled trial.


This book provides a most valuable record of recent research work on the factors which influence the development of mental deficiency. There is at present a great variety of specialists taking an interest in how the brain develops, and those who are relatively ignorant of the important work by psychologists in this field will find the book most valuable.

Special emphasis is laid on the importance of the environment in the early months of life, on the development of intelligence, and of satisfactory behaviour patterns. Most of the work described is of the greatest importance from the point of view of education in its widest sense, and the authors rightly stress the great need for research in this difficult field.


This report is interesting and entertaining; interesting as an illustration of how little can usefully be said on the subject, entertaining for the verbiage used to fill the lacunae. No terms of reference are quoted for the study group producing the report. In its compilation the members of the group would appear to have employed the method of free association on the wording of the title. Opening with the unexceptionable if somewhat diffuse statement:

"The history of mankind shows with what flexibility and with how great a measure of success humanity has adapted itself again and again to very radical changes in its living conditions" it concludes "But in the long run the greatest hope of mental health in the future of the peaceful uses of atomic energy is the raising of a new generation which has learnt to live on terms with ignorance and uncertainty . . . ."

Before reaching this peroration, however, its 45 pages are scattered with such important statements as "The general public of the whole world is a concept so vast that an attempt to make generalizations would be of no value", "Many people in government, and many elected representatives, have a feeling that Pandora’s box has been opened, and that anything can happen now", "in part, the authorities are in the same position as the general public and, in part, have special problems, owing to the demands and insecurities of their position". It is a pity this report was published. It will cause many intelligent readers (medical and lay) to wonder how such a potentially important subject can be treated with such a wealth of flautent platitudes: and such thoughts may extend to the World Health Organization which in some of its activities has done and is doing much useful work.


The Catechism series is well known to all students, and the fifth edition of the booklet on psychiatry has the advantages and faults of its predecessors. The main advantage is that the book contains questions of a kind likely to be asked in vivas: the main fault is that the answers are not likely to satisfy examiners who have an unfortunate habit of putting supplementary questions. For revision purposes, however, this booklet is valuable.


This book is an edited account of papers presented at a Specialist Conference in Psychiatry held in Glasgow
in 1957. Topics discussed were schizophrenia, psychosomatic medicine, tranquillizing drugs, mental deficiency, and biochemistry and genetics. The intention was to provide a survey of some of the newer developments in these fields and to stimulate a rapprochement between different viewpoints. In this the contributors have succeeded admirably, and the book can be strongly recommended as containing much information regarding recent advances in a palatable form. The standard of the contributions throughout is high and it would be invidious to single out any for special commendation. The contributors were mainly from the west of Scotland and this book illustrates the lively state of psychiatry in this region.


The author describes a novel method of sleep treatment or rather, prolonged narcosis. Patients are treated in groups of five to seven for a period of three weeks. Narcosis is induced by barbiturates and chlorpromazine, the "cocktail" being administered thrice daily so that there are three periods of sleep. Between these periods there are intervals of two hours or so when patients have their meals and toilet and medical procedures are carried out. Also during these periods, the doctor who is in charge of the group encourages them to talk about themselves, their dreams, and their thoughts. The patients also receive individual psychotherapy.

After describing the practical details of the treatment, the author discusses the dreams and thoughts expressed by the patients, the group and individual psychotherapy which the patients receive, and the value of this method as a treatment and as a means of psychological investigation of the individual patients.

The results of treatment in 142 patients are given. Except for schizophrenia where none of 18 patients was helped, the results are comparable with those obtained by more orthodox methods and the treatment is perhaps more economical of medical man-power than most others.


This book reports an investigation in which systematic, standard, psychological tests were applied to a group of children with varied brain pathology and to a similar number of healthy individuals matched in age and general intelligence to the experimental group. The object seems to have been less the elucidation of functional disturbances attendant on any particular type of cerebral pathology than the development of a technique of diagnosis differential as between organic brain damage and other causes of educational and social shortcomings in children. The tests employed range from those familiar in British and American practice such as the Binet, Bender-Gestalt, and Koh’s block, to the Strauss and Kephart character appraisal. Considerable industry and care is displayed in the statistical treatment of the results, which is pressed as far as factor analysis. But perhaps the most interesting conclusion is that, while in “brain-healthy” children no particular relation subsists between intellectual and affective features of their test behaviour, in those with cerebral pathology there is a marked connexion between these two aspects. The author’s attribution of this to a disturbance of “Grundfunktion” may or may not be viable. But the finding itself perhaps merits the attention of anyone who is content to treat motivation as a footnote to intellectual performance.


Projective techniques have an insecure yet tenacious hold on the skirts of applied psychology. The attractive assumptions on which they are based, and the perennial demand for some means of recording and delineating personality ensure their widespread use but cannot ensure acceptance of their validity. The present study is by one of the most prominent and experienced workers in this field. Dr. Harrower has accumulated during the last 15 years the responses of some 4,000 subjects to a combination of projective tests which include the Rorschach, Szondi, thematic apperception, sentence-completion, and “most unpleasant concept” tests. The findings obtained on more than one occasion were evaluated in respect of each subject’s productivity, relation to reality, thought content, constructive fantasy, anxiety, and intelligence level.

The investigation was designed to ascertain how far projective test findings mirror clinically detectable changes, and whether they differentiate between improvement brought about by psychological treatment and improvement that occurs without such intervention. The answers, which were provided by the evidence here presented in painstaking detail, amount to a weak and unimpressive “Yes” to the first question, and a fairly definite “No” to the second.


Devised in Switzerland and widely adopted throughout the world, the Rorschach test attained its maximum popularity in the United States, where it has also suffered its sharpest decline. It is, however, still much employed by clinicians, and this manual reviews in a systematic way the considerable volume of work on the Rorschach test published in European countries. The Scandinavian psychiatric literature is particularly well represented. After a brief introduction the technique of administration and scoring is fully described; then comes the largest part of the book, which deals with interpretation. As in most Rorschach publications, the weakest feature is in the attempt at impartial assessment of the test’s power.
BOOK REVIEWS


From 1949 to 1953 Dr. Karpman arranged for a symposium on juvenile delinquency to be held each year at the Annual Meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association. The proceedings, previously reported with some curtailment in the journal of the Association, are now collected and published in full. They make a large and wordy book, profusely illustrated with very crude drawings, which faithfully reflects the mixture of confidence and ignorance that unfortunately still characterizes the approach by child psychiatrists to the alarming problems of juvenile delinquency. The extent to which psychopathic personality can be held responsible for children's misconduct is a recurring theme in the book: the discussions of it throw disconcerting light on the possible outcome of those compulsory measures for dealing with psychopathic adolescents which the new Mental Health Act now provides in Great Britain.


The last edition of this book appeared in 1947. Little has been learnt about hysteria in the intervening years, and the changes in this latest edition are correspondingly few. A case history is introduced to illustrate what the author calls a "cascade effect" in which the stimulus of an emotional shock spreads outward and releases a series of severe changes of a somatic as well as a psychological nature. Imu, a condition probably identical with Latah, is described; and a short note added on the way the vegetative nervous system is affected by that voluntary increase in reflex responses which Kretschmer postulates in hysteria. The book exemplifies the curiously indeterminate nature of clinical conceptions of hysteria and its psychopathology.


Dr. Barbara, who is himself a stutterer, is a devoted adherent of the psychoanalytic theory and practice developed by the late Dr. Karen Horney. His book is a sustained explanation of stuttering in terms of Dr. Horney's theory of neurosis. His considerable experience of treating this irksome handicap is not turned to full account, as only one chapter, out of the 17 that make up the book, is concerned directly with treatment, and the author here absolves himself from detailed description of methods. He does not give any data enabling the reader to judge the success of treatment carried out along the broad lines he advocates, and all in all his book is disappointingly vague.


This is a book for physicists interested in cybernetics and the theory of communication. Philosophical, psychological, and linguistic questions are discussed in a speculative way, and particular attention paid to the concept of entropy. Two-fifths of the book is taken up with an obscurely written foreword by Dr. Muses.

BOOKS RECEIVED

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


The Pathology of Tumours of the Nervous System. By Dorothy S. Russell and L. J. Rubinstein, with a chapter on "Tissue Culture in Relation to Tumours of the Nervous System" by C. E. Lumsden. (Pp. vii + 318; 286 figures. 70s.) London: Edward Arnold. 1959.


