

Einführung in die Stereotaktischen Operationen mit einem Atlas des menschlichen Gehirns (Introduction to Stereotaxis with an Atlas of the Human Brain). In three volumes. Edited by Georges Schaltenbrand and Percival Bailey. (Pp. viii + 493; 230 figures, 76 plates and coloured overlays. \$233.35.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme; New York: Grune & Stratton. 1959.

These three volumes constitute a remarkable production and will be the standard aid to stereotaxic surgery for some time. The text, in both German and English, is contained in one volume and provides chapters on the anatomy, physiology, and electrical activity of the deep cell masses and a useful contribution on stereotaxic therapy and apparatus. The other volumes are an atlas of cerebral sections and histo-anatomical plates of the main nuclear masses. The quality of the plates is superb and the compilation has clearly demanded devoted and painstaking care. Two of the problems that have exercised stereotaxic theorists are the considerable variation in bony landmarks upon which to base reference planes for cerebral measurements, and the inherent anatomical variation of size of nuclear masses and cerebral ventricles. An attempt to deal with bony variations is made in this work by utilizing intracerebral reference points for the basic cerebral planes. Other workers used orbito-aural and inter-aural bony planes as horizontal and frontal reference planes, or for the latter a plane through the calcified pineal gland or posterior commissure, but the variability of these planes is impressive. Talairach suggested using the line joining anterior and posterior commissures for the horizontal plane and two planes at right angles to this at each commissure as frontal planes. These authors have adopted the inter-commissural line for the horizontal plane, and for the frontal sections a plane at right angles to this through the mid-commissural point. The mid-sagittal plane provides the median reference as always. It is claimed that this provides the least variable reference planes. To deal with the variability of size of the nuclear masses and ventricles, transparencies showing variations are provided to overlay the plates of the cerebral sections. Care has been taken to avoid shrinkage and distortion of the 111 brains used to prepare the atlas and many of the sections are enlarged twice or four times normal size. On all of the sections the reference planes are clearly shown and the atlas is pleasantly simple to use. A good deal of anthropometric information and data is included which may be useful. Minor criticisms would be that the text volume is unwieldy to use and some of the text is difficult to follow. It is interesting to note in view of recent trends in the treatment of Parkinsonism that Hasslet does not find bilateral thalamic and pallidal destruction justifiable because of consequent mental impairment. Cooper's work receives but scanty discussion. Nevertheless these volumes will be indispensable to workers in this field.

Intracranial Calcification. By Fermo Mascherpa and Vincenzo Valentino. (Pp. xxi + 150; 98 figures. 72s.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications; Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1959.

This little book of some 140 pages covers the subject fairly fully. The text is divided into non-pathological calcification, pathological non-tumorous calcification, and tumorous calcification. Generally speaking the descriptions are sound and the references adequate but not extensive. The radiographs (about 100) are of good quality but they are positive prints, but a disturbing feature is the lack of pathological confirmation in the majority of the cases. On the other hand a few radiographs are shown with the caption "non-verified", and this would imply that the others are verified. It is unfortunate that there is no statement giving confirmation, since it is well known that it is difficult and often impossible to make a pathological diagnosis on an intracerebral radiographic shadow. For this reason one hesitates to recommend the work wholeheartedly to those inexperienced in this field.

Chemical and Molecular Basis of Nerve Activity. By David Nachmansohn. (Pp. xi + 235; 61 figures. \$7.50.) New York: Academic Press. 1959.

The author's conviction of the role of acetylcholine in transmission along nerve fibres is already well known, and this is a beautifully written account of his own experiments and ideas as well as an excellent review of the work of others. It covers a wide range of subjects under the general heading of nerve activity and each is treated with equal lucidity and fairness. Nachmansohn is not afraid to state the difficulties of any particular theory nor to gloss over an existing problem.

The illustrations everywhere are clear and well described, but it is regretted that the titles of references are omitted as this reduces their utility to the reader.

Neuro-Psychopharmacology. Proceedings of the First International Congress of Neuro-Psychopharmacology, Rome 1958. Edited by P. B. Bradley, P. Deniker, and C. Radouco-Thomas (Pp. xv + 727; illustrated. £6 15s.) Amsterdam-New York-Princeton: Elsevier Publishing Company (London: D. Van Nostrand). 1959.

This volume displays the advantages and disadvantages of such congresses. The symposia and plenary sessions record reviews of the present state of knowledge in various branches of clinical and experimental work on the subject, with discussion by leading workers in the relevant fields. The subjects discussed are the effect of drugs on behaviour in animals and on mental states in man, both in the production of abnormal states and in the treatment of abnormal states.

The major part of the volume consists of 133 short original papers describing recent investigations. These vary widely in quality and many of them would probably not be accepted for publication in journals. Their approach to the problems varies widely too, but it would be rash to disparage unusual approaches in a field where so little is firmly established. The reviewer hopes that there will be more work in the future of the type exemplified by Pare and Sandler's clinical and biochemical study of a trial of iproniazid in the treatment of depression (published more fully in this journal 1959,

22, 247), for further advances will surely come from a closer correlation between clinical observations on the one hand, and electrophysiological and biochemical findings on the other hand.

The Henderson Trust Lectures: Cerebral Dominance and Its Relation to Psychological Function. By O. L. Zangwill. (Pp. 31; 7 figures, 7 tables. 10s. 6d.) Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd. 1960.

In this lecture Professor Zangwill gives a lucid account of current knowledge regarding cerebral dominance and handedness. His own contributions to this subject have shown that left-handers often lack a fully dominant hemisphere. He puts forward the interesting observation that left-handers may be handicapped by having a "cerebral ambilaterality", and this may result in educational difficulties and a certain vulnerability to stress.

Mental Illness in London. By Vera Norris. (Pp. 317; 11 figures. 35s.) London: Chapman and Hall. 1959.

This book, which is the sixth of the Maudsley monographs, maintains the standard of its predecessors.

The object of the study was to describe the population admitted to two observation wards and three mental hospitals in the London area during the period 1947-1949. Case summaries were made for all patients admitted and they were followed up as far as possible until December 31, 1951. The methods used in the survey and the results are described in detail and though few of these results are surprising, this careful study gives a factual basis to much which has hitherto been impressionistic.

One result of the survey was to demonstrate the alarming picture of increasing overcrowding which existed then in mental hospitals and the apparent urgent need for more hospital beds. This conclusion was based on the presuppositions that treatment and psychiatrists' attitudes would not change materially. In fact there have been tremendous and unforeseeable advances in treatment, and psychiatrists are coming to realize that a patient should not be kept in hospital for longer than is absolutely necessary. Probably the only reason now preventing many patients being discharged from hospital is the deplorable lack of adequate facilities for treating them as out-patients and it is to this rather than providing more beds that attention should be directed.

Although one may criticize the conclusions of the book in this way, it remains a wealth of valuable information. It is to be hoped that a similar study covering a more recent period will become available in due course for comparison with the results presented in this volume.

Nurse-Patient Relationships in Psychiatry, 2nd ed. By Helen Willis Render and M. Olga Weiss. (Pp. vii + 312. 46s.) New York-London-Toronto: McGraw-Hill. 1959.

The majority of text books of psychiatry for nurses deal mainly with symptoms and treatments of various mental disorders. This book, as the title implies, deals specifically with what others often neglect, namely, the nurse-patient relationship. Though the authors are somewhat prolix the advice given is generally sound.

The handling of all patients, but especially the mentally ill, depends not only on technical skill, but also upon an intuitive sympathy. For those nurses who lack this, this book will do as much as any book can towards remedying the deficit. It is unfortunate that it is so expensive.

The Natural History of Cerebral Palsy. By Bronson Crothers and Richmond S. Paine. (Pp. xi + 299; 65 figures. 32s. 6d.) London: Oxford University Press. 1960.

This is a most sensible book written by critically minded specialists. It contains a great deal of information which is of value to the neurologist who sees cases of cerebral palsy. There is much criticism of the rather emotionally tinged types of therapy. Thus the child attending a cerebral palsy clinic may be subjected to study by a large number of specialists most of whom have different ideas regarding treatment. The authors found it impossible to appraise the value of various types of treatment in their own series. The aim of treatment should be the achievement of the greatest possible degree of independence. Stereotyped forms of physiotherapy may be inappropriate and discouraging to many types of case.

Experimental Studies of the Mode of Action of Electroconvulsive Therapy. [*Acta psychiat. scand.* Suppl. 145, Vol. 35]. Edited by Jan-Otto Ottoson. (Pp. 145; 145 figures, 145 tables, 145 illustrations.) Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard. 1960.

This monograph studies the therapeutic effects of electroconvulsive therapy on depression and the side effects of the treatment, such as memory impairment. By modifying the convulsive effect by drugs and by varying the intensity of stimulus used, the author concludes that the therapeutic effect and the side effects are through different cerebral mechanisms. This may have important clinical applications.

Medical Aspects of Amateur Boxing. Issued by the London Amateur Boxing Association. (Pp. 63; 2s. 6d.) London. 1959.

This booklet is written by a number of doctors in a variety of specialities and is issued by the London Amateur Boxing Association. The neurological aspects are dealt with particularly by Dr. J. L. Blonstein and Dr. Edwin Clarke. A principal object for those advising boxing associations is to prevent serious consequences resulting from the inevitable head blows by eliminating from boxing those who are liable to severe complications. Care is taken that only fit men box and that contestants are evenly matched for age and experience, but neither clinical examination, skull radiography, nor E.E.G. are much help in detecting those specially susceptible to serious injury. Detailed advice is given to medical officers in deciding how long an injured boxer should be put off boxing. The authors believe that amateur boxing is safe compared with other sports, but they are at pains to point out that in control and supervision and therefore presumably in safety there is a vast difference between amateur and professional boxing.