

Book reviews

SURGICAL TREATMENT OF THE EPILEPSIES AND ITS NEUROPHYSIOLOGICAL ASPECTS Edited by J. Černáček and L. Cigánek. (Pp. 190. Price not stated.) Bratislava: Publishing House of Slovak Academy of Sciences. 1962.

This book records the papers and verbatim discussions of a round table conference held at Smolenice in October 1960 under the chairmanship of Professor H. Jasper of Montreal. Most of the participants came from eastern Europe, and of the eight papers recorded only two, one by Professor Jasper who also summarized the discussions, and one by Dr. R. Vizioli of Rome, came from the west. The papers generally have an electroencephalographic flavour rather than a neurosurgical, and two can be singled out for special commendation. The first of these is Dr. Jasper's which outlines new concepts of focal epilepsy, including that of a hierarchy of foci, in which there may be a group of neurones with the lowest threshold for epileptic discharge within a very much larger mass of epileptogenic brain tissue. There is some evidence of mutual facilitation between various parts of this larger mass. The second is by Dr. Z. Servít of Prague on the prophylactic effect of anticonvulsant therapy in rats with alumina cream lesions in the motor and acoustic areas. His work is well controlled, and he shows clearly that the administration of phenylethylbarbituric acid (Dormiral) for a few weeks after the production of a lesion not only greatly decreases the likelihood of epilepsy even after drug therapy is later stopped but also reduces the severity of the seizures. The book stresses that surgical therapy is only indicated in a minority of epileptic patients, and brings together much information which is not currently available in the Anglo-American literature.

LIVING WITH EPILEPTIC SEIZURES By Samuel Livingston. (Pp. xix + 348; 11 figures; 21 tables. \$6.50.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1963.

The emotional impact of epilepsy both on patients and their relations and friends is large. It is always part of the physician's duty to alleviate this as much as possible by explaining what epilepsy is, by giving as reassuring a prognosis as possible, and by foreseeing and as far as possible forestalling, the consequences that the condition may entail in educational, social, and economic life. Some explanation of the principles of treatment and the likely side-effects of some regimes is also usually desirable. The question of inheritance, marriage, and choice of a career may have to be discussed. Intelligence and the possibility of mental deterioration may be asked about, especially by parents. These and similar questions are dealt with clearly and sympathetically in this volume. It will be of special value to the general practitioner who has epileptic patients but the general physician and paediatrician will also find it useful. It is written in such terms that it can safely be recommended to intelligent epileptic patients and their relatives. Although published

in America the only sections which are not applicable to conditions in this country are the chapter on service for the epileptic and some parts of the discussion on social-economic aspects. In general the book is in harmony with the increasing tendency for patients to take an intelligent and informed interest in their own diseases. The price is unfortunately high in Britain.

SARCOMAS OF THE BRAIN By James W. Kernohan and Alfred Uihlein. (Pp. viii + 192; 96 figures. \$8.00.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1962.

The authors are to be congratulated on having produced an admirable monograph reporting in detail a series of 241 of these neoplasms, which are rare indeed in the series of brain tumours seen by an individual neurosurgeon. Attention is drawn to the very wide spread of age incidence, to the varying degrees of malignancy within a given type, to treatment and prognosis. It is concluded that the results of modern treatment, combining extensive excision of the tumour with subsequent radiotherapy, are better than is the case with other malignant forms of intracranial tumour. As is usual with any group of malignant neoplasms in the central nervous system the occasional patient with a long survival period is noted. The suggestion is made that new lines of study by tissue culture and electron microscopy might lead to more exact prognosis in a given case.

The book is admirably produced with illustrations and photomicrographs of the highest quality.

WYLIE MCKISSOCK

THE BIOLOGY AND TREATMENT OF INTRACRANIAL TUMORS. Edited by William S. Fields and Paul C. Sharkey. (Pp. xi + 505; illustrated. \$15.75.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1962.

This volume is a record of the ninth annual meeting of the Houston Neurological Society held in 1961. It contains 18 chapters by various participants, all of whom have contributed very readable papers. The book is arranged in four sections, and the first of these deals with epidemiological and genetic considerations of various brain tumours. An interesting chapter by Dr. Leonard P. Kurland discusses the widely varying discrepancies in natural mortality rates between the North American and western European countries and countries like Japan, and concludes that different criteria must be employed in compiling the statistics. Dr. Zimmerman introduces a very interesting chapter on experimental brain tumours. The second section on pathology and pathological classifications contains two important chapters by Professor Zülch of Cologne, as well as supporting chapters by American authors. The historical development of present-day ideas is stressed. The third section on diagnostic methods includes chapters on electroencephalography, angiography, and pneumography, but covers little fresh ground. Isotope scanning techniques are not mentioned.

The last section on therapy has chapters on radiation therapy and on surgery, and is somewhat condensed. The chief value of the book lies in its two opening sections, and for these sections it can be recommended. It is clear that morphology alone is not adequate for the classification of brain tumours, but that both light and electron microscopy studies in conjunction with the histochemical reactions and tissue culture studies are necessary for the classification of a tumour and for considerations of treatment. Such views are, of course, not new, but they are set out in this volume in a stimulating fashion.

THE NEURAL MECHANISM OF PARKINSONIAN TREMOR By J. M. Gybels. (Pp. 161; 43 figures. NF. 320.-) Brussels: Editions Arsacia, S.A. 1963.

The subject which Dr. Gybels has chosen for his thesis is a very difficult one to investigate thoroughly from a physiological point of view. Nevertheless, he has written an interesting and clear account of his animal experiments, which were designed to throw light on the origin of Parkinsonian tremor and to define 'tremorogenic centres' within the central nervous system. He does not succeed in the latter quest, and in the former his arguments are based on such scanty experimental results and circuitous logic that they leave one far from convinced. The substantia nigra is thought to be the *fons et origo* of Parkinsonian tremor, yet the only post-mortem examination that is described was of a case in which this region of the brain was normal. It is concluded, therefore, that there must have been a functional lesion of the substantia nigra or of its connexions which was not demonstrable by the anatomical techniques. There are several such arguments in the book. Several theories of tremor mechanisms are discussed, but the experiments do not materially add to them.

This is a well produced and beautifully illustrated book. It should revive much new interest in Parkinsonian tremor, and should stimulate further research.

GEOFFREY RUSHWORTH

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY IN MAN AND ANIMALS Edited by Geoffrey H. Bourne and Ma. Nelly Golarz. (Pp. xvi + 524; 355 figures; 14 tables. S.Fr./DM. 112.50.) Basel: S. Karger AG. 1963.

Muscular dystrophy results from a genetically determined disorder, the precise nature of which has not yet been defined, but which has become a very important subject for research at the present time.

This volume from 20 authors provides a welcome opportunity for the neurologist to be brought up to date in this important subject. The clinical and electrophysiological approach seems to have become somewhat static, but the histochemical, the electron-microscopical, and tissue culture studies are making steady progress. The inherited dystrophies in mice and chickens provide a contribution which may help greatly, and in general the outlook has become quite hopeful.

ACTUALITÉS NEUROPHYSIOLOGIQUES. 4th series Edited by P. Laget and A. Monnier. (Pp. 300; 180 figures. N.F.70.-) Paris: Masson et Cie. 1962.

This latest volume of essays, on neurophysiological topics, maintains the very high standard set by the previous three volumes. Each essay is full of material of current interest and, where necessary, translation has been made into clear and concise French. It is largely to the credit of the translation editors that some of the papers of non-French-speaking authors are much more easily understood than are their usual papers in English. The editors are to be congratulated on collecting together such a galaxy of talent and in presenting the material in a form which is both pleasant and interesting to read. The illustrations of neurophysiological events have been very well converted to line drawings, and are clearly described. The four volumes together form a most valuable and stimulating contribution to neurophysiology. They should form a landmark in physiological literature.

GENERAL PSYCHOPATHOLOGY By Karl Jaspers. (Pp. xxxii + 922. 75s.) Manchester: Manchester University Press. 1963.

In 1912 two young psychiatrists, one English, one German, were busy writing books on psychopathology which, with minor additions, are still valued and widely read. The books differed greatly in size, scope, and style, but had, in common, a coherent and lucid concern with general principles. Bernard Hart, in the Preface to the fifth edition of 'The psychology of insanity' in 1956, said he had left the book in its original form because the principles it expounded had been relatively unaffected by the advances of subsequent years; Karl Jaspers, launching the seventh edition of his *Allgemeine Psychopathologie* in 1959, similarly wrote that 'the methodological principles remain largely unaffected by the increased material'. Jaspers's book, magistral in grasp, catholic in range, and strict in reasoning, stands worthily alongside his contributions to philosophy; indeed it outdoes them in concision and closeness to the facts.

It is not unlikely that if this book had been available in an English translation during the last 30 years, the course of English psychiatry would have been different, and the ascendancy of psychoanalysis in American psychiatry less sweeping. There is a consistency in Jaspers' thinking and a structured adequacy about his theory that appeals to the critical intellect: what his psychopathology lacks in vivid dynamism, it makes up for by its ordered rigour.

Dr. Hoenig and Miss Hamilton have provided an admirable version of this classical work. The task they set themselves, and surmounted, was a hard one, for Jaspers, like his teacher Max Weber, has not an elegant or a pellucid command of language. The translation is smooth and faithful.

RÉACTIONS PSYCHOLOGIQUES A LA MALADIE By G. Abraham, W. Boven, A. Dalla Volta, M. Lob, J. J. Lopez-Ibor, and P. B. Schneider. (Pp. 134. Fr. 12.-) Paris: L'Expansion Scientifique Française. 1963.

This collection of papers presented at the third international colloquium of medical psychology at Lausanne in 1960 represents the views of six clinicians on problems of psychosomatic medicine. There is a welcome absence of the dogmatism so often encountered in this field, and