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 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.


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.


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.


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 that 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, magisterial in grasp, catholic in range, and strict in reasoning, stands worthy 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 ascendency 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.


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
an approach that is humane rather than detached. This book will not figure in the literature quoted in 20 years' time, but the attitude towards the individual patient which it exemplifies will not fail to communicate itself to the reader.


This is a modest account of how the author, a clinical psychologist, effected improvement in the conduct of a group of troubled adolescents by daily friendly discussions and by steadily insisting that they should show awareness of separate identity, and of the concepts of space and time. The thesis is weakened by diagnostic naivete, and overloaded with speculative psychopathology. It seems very unlikely, despite the title, that these seven juveniles were all in fact schizophrenic: the book would have gained greatly by the inclusion of adequate clinical details, however humdrum such descriptive material may seem to the therapeutic enthusiast.


This welcome book, by a travelled Norwegian psychiatrist, provides a well-documented, erudite account of the manifold experimental studies of schizophrenia carried out in eastern Europe, on lines developed and given a theoretical frame by Pavlov. Dr. Astrup has worked his way through a vast literature, of which he here provides a digest (there are 1,105 items in the bibliography, most of them Russian), and he reports extensive investigations of his own which he carried out on a sample of 306 chronic schizophrenics. On the strength of his findings he arrives at a subdivision of types of schizophrenia which does not rest, as in the Kraepelinian nosology, on the manifest phenomena of disease alone. Dr. Astrup has pointed the way for a vigorous experimental attack on some hitherto unfamiliar problems of the pathophysiology of schizophrenia.

DIE EXPERIMENTELLE PSYCHOSE By H. Leuner. (Pp. x + 275; 20 figures. DM. 69.60.) Berlin: Springer Verlag. 1962.

Dr. Leuner has been collecting his data and refining his theoretical position for five years. He believes that from the mental disturbance produced by lysergic acid diethylamide much illumination can be cast on the essential nature of schizophrenia. Drugs of this kind produce, according to him, qualitative functional changes, which make up a basal toxic syndrome whose main features are regression, disturbed consciousness and hallucinations, and heightened emotional excitability. He develops this theme in accordance with the concepts of his teacher, the late Professor Conrad, and offers a dynamic interpretation of the toxic phenomena he has observed, which he then applies to the interpretation of schizophrenia. There is here much reification of abstractions, as almost always in dynamic psychopathological studies.


The publisher's assertion, that until this book appeared there was no comprehensive study of the dementias of later life, is excessive, nevertheless a well-composed monograph such as this, neatly pruned of excessive detail, is useful to inexpert readers. It is, in effect, an extended textbook presentation, reinforced by the authors' clinical and neuropathological observations at the Hôpital Sainte-Anne. The first half of the book is devoted to Pick's and Alzheimer's forms of presenile dementia; in the second half, dementia due to cerebral arteriosclerosis and the senile dementias are described. The authors claim powers of diagnostic discrimination which are rather beyond those usually attained in this difficult group of disorders, and their review of previous work contains notable omissions; but the reader who wants a confident guide through unfamiliar country will be pleased with the vade mecum.


Sechenov (1829 to 1905) was described by Pavlov as the 'father of Russian physiology', and this presentation of some of his writings indicates that he anticipated many of to-day's problems. Thus in 1871 he wrote the article: 'Who is to elaborate the problems of psychology, and how?' Here he stressed the importance of the physiological study of complex psychological phenomena. Regarding the need to make psychology a positive science he wrote: 'Only physiology can achieve this, because it alone holds the key to the truly scientific analysis of psychical activity'.

BOOKS RECEIVED

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


