

Book reviews

THE PERCEPTION OF CAUSALITY By A. Michotte. Translated by T. R. and Elaine Miles, with a commentary by T. R. Miles. (Pp. xxii + 460; 6 diagrams. 45s.) London: Methuen & Co. Ltd. 1963.

This is a new and enlarged edition of the book, first published in 1946, in which Michotte gave a full account of his classic series of investigations into the conditions in which a causal relation between two events is directly perceived as opposed to appearing as a mere *de facto* succession. The extremely elegant and simple experiments, of which upwards of a hundred are described, break entirely fresh ground in experimental psychology while retaining throughout a close connexion with everyday experience of things, events, causes, and effects. Perception of these may be, and often is, disturbed in cerebral disorder and it is surprising that the opportunity which Michotte's techniques offer of enquiring quantitatively into the forms of such disturbances has not so far been seized on. To both neurologists and psychologists who are alive to fresh possibilities in the analysis of disorders of higher level cerebral function this book can be most warmly recommended.

R. C. OLDFIELD

THE WAKING BRAIN, 2nd ed. By H. W. Magoun. (Pp. vii + 188; 100 figures. \$7.75.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1963.

In recent years there have been startling advances in knowledge regarding brain mechanisms, and this further edition of a well-known publication provides a valuable presentation of the latest discoveries.

The picture that is emerging has two striking features. First there are the driving systems such as arise from the reticular formation and from the limbic system, but there is a strong effect in both directions—from cortex to generating systems as well as in the other direction. The other remarkable development is concerned with the thresholds of the peripheral sense organs which are controlled both by the influence of alerting systems and also by a feedback protective mechanism. In this vital field knowledge is advancing rapidly, and Dr. Magoun is an authority many will be glad to consult in these pages.

W. RITCHIE RUSSELL

BIOCHEMISTRY OF MENTAL DISEASE By Theodore L. Sourkes. (Pp. xxiii + 402; 39 tables; 3 figures. 96s.) New York: Harper & Row. 1962.

The importance of biochemistry in psychiatric research is not lessened by the prematurely acclaimed discoveries which have in the event disappointed those who want to see the chemical pathology of schizophrenia uncovered.

Dr. Sourkes's dependable and well-organized book covers a great deal of ground. It is evidently intended for psychiatrists who have only a meagre knowledge of biochemistry; a large part of the manual is devoted to the

normal processes of intermediary metabolism. The sections dealing with morbid states and with the action of drugs are detailed and informative but insufficiently critical.

PSYCHIATRIE DER GEGENWART Edited by H. W. Gruhle, R. Jung, W. Mayer-Gross, and M. Müller. Volume 1, part 2: *Forschung und Praxis*. (Pp. viii + 1,056; 91 figures. DM. 110.) Berlin: Springer Verlag. 1963.

This volume, which deals with the foundations and the methods of psychiatry, is appropriately weighty and methodical. The four main divisions are psychopathology and psychological examination; psychotherapy; somatic therapy; and philosophic principles. The contributors are, for the most part, Swiss, with a sprinkling of German, English, French, and American writers. Most of them are, for the English reader, unduly wordy, and, in the philosophical section, unhappily focused on existential analysis, to the point of being incomprehensible. The somatic chapters, however, in the competent hands of Professor Max Müller and his colleagues in Berne, are close-tied to the factual processes they describe, and include a heroically elaborate article on drug treatment which, with its 165 pages, is the longest in the book. A companion volume on laboratory methods is due to appear shortly which will contain articles by Conrad Strömngren, Hassler, Jung, Bleuler, Giljarowskij and other noted authorities on biochemistry, genetics endocrine changes, and other solid matters; this will no doubt correct the impression made by the abstruse and flocculent themes that take up so much of the volume under review.

ASPECTS OF PSYCHIATRIC RESEARCH Edited by D. Richter, J. M. Tanner, Lord Taylor, and O. L. Zangwill. (Pp. viii + 445; 36 figures; 17 tables. 63s.) London: Oxford University Press. 1962.

This review of progress during the last decade has the familiar merits—diversity, authenticity, recency—and the familiar defects—unevenness, bias, and omissions—which characterize most such compilations. The editors of this volume, who evidently believe there is safety in numbers, have collected an impressive band of contributors, most of them specialists in the subjects they describe. The chapters by Sir Geoffrey Vickers and Lord Taylor are of a more general character, and, in their rather partisan arguments, out of keeping with the rest. It will be a signal achievement when the progress of psychiatric research calls for an annual, instead of a decennial, review.

THE SCOPE OF EPIDEMIOLOGY IN PSYCHIATRY By Tsung-Yi Lin and C. C. Standley. (Pp. 76; 2 figures. 5s.) Public Health Papers, No. 16. Geneva: World Health Organization. 1962.

This is the second W.H.O. public health paper to be devoted to the subject of psychiatric epidemiology in the