Nerves from *The Remaining Medical Works of that Famous and Renowned Physician Dr. Thomas Willis.*

The whole production is well planned and attractive, and although to some extent an artefact it does succeed in giving the feel of the original edition. It should introduce a number of new readers to a fascinating era in the development of medical thought. It is to be hoped that all medical libraries will add it to their stock. The growing number of those already interested in Willis and his times will certainly wish to possess it.

C. W. M. WHITTY

DAS VEGETATIVE NERVENSYSTEM Vol. 3 Fundamental Research; Vol. 4. Clinical and Therapeutic Aspects of Autonomic Functional Disturbances. Edited by K. Hartmann-von Monakow (Vol. 3: Pp. x + 230, 65 figures. 48 Swi. F. Vol. 4: Pp. x + 268, 41 figures. 94 Swi. F.) S. Karger: Basel and New York. 1966.

The third volume of this series of topical problems in psychiatry and neurology contains a most useful review and discussion of the part played by the autonomic nervous system in the neuro-endocrine regulation of adaptive reactions by E. Bajusz, and the fourth volume a very good review by J. B. Belloni and H. Terzian on the autonomic nervous system and mental pathology; both of these reviews are in English. E. Hagen's anatomy of the vegetative nervous system is illustrated by beautiful photographs. H. Heyck's article in German on migraine and related headaches is most interesting to English readers. He argues that the essential disorder is an arteriovenous shunt, short-circuiting the capillaries, and that this causes the ischaemia of parts of the brain. The passing of high pressure on to small, thin-walled arterioles, which are not equipped to deal with it, he argues, is responsible for oedema. Ergotamine works by closing down the small blood vessels. P. W. NATHAN

EVOLUTION OF THE FOREBRAIN: Phylogenesis and Ontogenesis of the Forebrain. Edited by R. Hassler and H. Stephan. (Pp. viii + 464; 295 figures. DM. 96.) Georg Thieme Verlag: Stuttgart. 1966.

Forty-two papers on the structure and development of the central nervous system delivered at a symposium in Frankfurt in 1965 are gathered together under this rather ambitious title. The papers range widely over the vertebrate kingdom from teleosts to man, using techniques from gross anatomy to electron microscopy.

The great majority of the papers inevitably deal with restricted fields in a single vertebrate, and have been published in brief form which tends, in some cases, to reduce their value to the general reader, while, in others, a number of views have had to be expressed without full discussion of the relevant evidence—a feature which makes it difficult to assess their true significance.

Most of the authors relate their findings to the general concept of evolution of the brain. It is inevitable on the one hand that such speculations arising from a series of separate studies on single animals cannot readily be synthesized into a general picture, more particularly when little account is taken of the highly specialized functional attributes of each animal which must be mirrored in the structure of the nervous system. On the other hand, those papers which attempt to give a general survey suffer equally from paucity of detailed information. Thus the book remains a series of separate contributions, and fails to live up to its title despite the excellence of many of the papers.

It is almost inevitable that a general criticism of this nature is applicable to a publication of this kind, but this should not detract from the value of the individual contributions, many of which are thought provoking and fully repay careful study. It is difficult as well as invidious to highlight particular papers from among so many, but there are excellent sections on the limbic and visual systems, on the corpus striatum and thalamus, and on the formation and differentiation of nerve cells. Even if the evolutionary significance of the findings is problematical, there is much here to stimulate students of the forebrain to undertake further studies of more localized regions in a wide spectrum of vertebrates, and it is to be hoped that such studies will include more quantitative and physiological measurements.

G. J. ROMANES

NEUROLOGICAL DIAGNOSTIC TECHNIQUES Proceedings of the 13th Annual Houston Neurological Scientific Symposium. Compiled and edited by W. S. Fields. (Pp. xii + 429; illustrated. $16.00.) Charles C. Thomas: Springfield, Illinois. 1966.

The date of this symposium is not mentioned anywhere in the volume. The investigations required in the neurological clinic extend to every corner of clinical investigation, so it may to some readers seem inappropriate to try to bring together those which are specially used by the neurologist. Thus chapters on virology and muscle biopsy do not seem to mix very well with radioisotopic scanning or psychological testing. However, all neurologists will find something helpful and stimulating somewhere in these chapters, particularly perhaps the chapter on computer applications to clinical problems.

W. RITCHIE RUSSELL

THE GENETICS OF NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS (Oxford monographs on medical genetics.) By R. T. C. Pratt. (Pp. vii + 310, 80*s*.) Oxford University Press: London. 1967.

An immense amount of work has gone into the preparation of this admirable volume, which gives an account of the genetic background to a large range of neurological disorders. The book assumes a basic knowledge of genetics and *An Introduction to Medical Genetics* by J. A. Fraser Roberts is recommended by the author for preliminary reading.

A sampling of selected subjects indicates that the subject matter is both accurate and up-to-date. The reference system is particularly notable. At the end of each section is a small list of selected references and at the end of the book is a bibliography comprising 2,814 references. Such an arrangement could well be used by