THE BIOCHEMICAL BASIS OF NEUROPHARMACOLOGY
By Jack R. Cooper, Floyd E. Bloom, and Robert H. Roth.
(Pp. 217; illustrated; £3.00, paper back £1.90.) Oxford
To write a book on pharmacology based on the bio-
chemical mode of action of the drugs is a brave enterprise.
To do so for drugs whose action is on the central nervous
system requires particular courage. This short volume is
just such an enterprise, based on the course given to
medical and graduate students at Yale University. Since
our present knowledge of the physiology and bio-
chemistry of the brain is pitifully inadequate to explain
even the normal functions of this organ, it would be
asking too much to expect it to be sufficient to explain
fully the many subtle effects produced by drugs. For this
reason, the book consists mainly of biochemical and
physiology, and relatively little neuropharmacology.
Nevertheless, if only for its originality of approach, this
book is to be welcomed. The information init is up-to-date,
clear and succinct, and the method of presentation—even
if it cannot fully explain the actions of any drug—
nevertheless provides many tantalizing glimpses of possible
modes of action and many provocative cross-references
between drugs whose actions are otherwise quite different.
The book is open to some minor criticisms on layout and
production—for example, the illustrations, especially
the histological and electronmicroscopical reproductions,
are rather poor and the legends not always fully informa-
tive—presumably this is in part explained by the low
price. Overall, however, this is a useful and interesting
account of those aspects of the physiology and bio-
chemistry of the brain which are believed to be affected
by drugs. The material is presented in a simple, easily
understood fashion and does not make too heavy
reading. It should be valuable for senior undergraduates
and postgraduate students, not only in pharmacology
but in physiology, biochemistry, and even for those
physicians interested in the background of a group of
drugs which are playing an ever-increasing role in
clinical medicine.

DISEases OF THE NERVous SYSTEM 11th ed. By Sir
Francis Walsh. (Pp. xv + 381; illustrated; £3.00).
This book, now in its 11th edition, requires no intro-
duction from a reviewer as it has for long been the
standard work for those wishing to acquire, within a
brief space, knowledge of the art and science of clinical
neurology, as opposed to mere factual information. An
occasional appealing anachronism has been handed on
through succeeding editions over 30 years, such as the
prohibition of violent purgation in the treatment of
strokes, and certain growing points in neurology
receive rather less than justice, but the form and content
remain as satisfying as ever. Dr. John Walsh has con-
tributed two interesting chapters on the relations of liver
and brain and on lead poisoning. It should perhaps be
added that the standard of proof reading has scarcely
been worthy of this classic text.

MYElinATION By A. N. Davidson and A. Peters. (Pp. xvi+
238; illustrated; £13.50.) Thomas: Springfield,
Anatomist and biochemist have combined to provide a
clearly and concisely written monograph that will be of
value to anyone who has an interest in neurological
disorders. The greater part of the book is taken up by the
first two chapters which deal in considerable depth with
the morphology, development, and biochemistry of the
myelin sheath. The text is amply supported with diagrams
and excellent electron micrographs. The three shorter
chapters deal with abnormalities in the composition of
myelin, myelin deficiencies related to inborn errors of
human metabolism, and, a rather intriguing contribution,
diseases affecting myelinization in domestic animals. Each
chapter is supported by a comprehensive list of references.
The book not only contains a wealth of useful information,
it is also most attractively produced. It is an important
monograph that can be recommended without hesitation.

THE DE LANGE SYNDROME By J. M. Berg, B. D. McCready,
M. A. C. Ridler, and G. F. Smith. (Pp. vii + 135;
illustrated; £3.15.) Institute for Research into Mental
Retardation Monograph No. 2. Pergamon
In 1933 Dr. Cornelia de Lange, who was professor of
paediatrics in the University of Amsterdam, described
a child with mental retardation associated with somatic
signs. Although rare, it is being increasingly often diag-
osed but, as is natural with a rare condition, it is
uncertain which signs are consistent parts of a syndrome
and which are coincidental. In this short monograph
the authors report 18 personally observed patients and
review the literature. They still feel unable to define the
syndrome but certain features appear to be highly
characteristic. These include mental and growth retarda-
tion, confluent eyebrows, microcephaly, brachycephaly,
low-set ears, anteverted nostrils and a prominent philtrum.
Abnormalities of the hands and feet and hirsutism added
to a picture which immediately suggests the satyr of
Greek mythology. The posture of the child on p. 26 is
so classical that one can almost see the pan pipes—but
a syrinx is one abnormality yet to be recorded. Pedigrees
indicate a genetic factor, but no consistent chromosomal
or biochemical abnormality has yet been identified.
This careful review should help to define an interesting
syndrome. It is well produced with clear tables and illus-
trations.

NOTICE
1st INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON INTRACRANIAL
PRESSURE 27, 28, 29 July 1972, Hannover. Topics:
(1) methodology of ICP measurements, (2) physiological
and pathophysiological aspects of ICP, (3) clinical and
therapeutic aspects of ICP. Details from Dr. M. Brock,
Neurochirurgische Klinik, Medizinische Hochschule, 3
Hannover-Kleefeld, Roderbruchstrasse 101, W.
Germany.