

neurology, as taught at the Technical University of Aachen. Its inclusiveness follows a German tradition which goes back to Oppenheim at the start of the century, and makes this an unsuitable book for students. It would be an even better work for practitioners to consult if it had contained key references to the literature.

The book is stuffed with facts on anatomy, physiology, as well as clinical neurology and methods of investigation. The picture on the whole is reminiscent of practice in the United Kingdom, but there are divergences. In diagnosis it is said that Lhermitte's sign denotes inflammation of the meninges, the grasp reflex diffuse rather than frontal brain damage; no allowance is made for age in loss of vibration sense, sweating is given more emphasis than blood pressure in autonomic testing; contrast radiography is considered harmless, and angiography is apparently so accessible that it is used to diagnose 'brain death'; the dangerous rule of thumb is repeated that lumbar puncture is safe in the absence of papilloedema.

Time and improved communications should show whether Professor Poeck's discrepant treatment proves more successful: surgery at the end of the second week after subarachnoid haemorrhage, energetic barbiturate treatment in status epilepticus, stereotactic surgery on the subthalamic nucleus in Parkinsonism, prolonged bed rest in demyelination, and early mobilization and return to work after concussion. He deviates from British practice by not using corticosteroids in Bell's palsy and shingles, antibiotics in Sydenham's chorea, or surgery in syringomyelia.

It was surprising to read that Parkinsonism is a dominant genetic trait of low penetrance, that sphincter disturbances are anything but the exception in the Guillain-Barré syndrome, that hemifacial myokymia is typical of multiple sclerosis, and hemifacial spasm of angle tumours (calling for vertebral angiography).

The book closes with a useful chapter on neurological side-effects of drugs. Perhaps the next edition will include the contraceptive pill, in addition to the current information that urine from a case of belladonna poisoning in the eye of a rabbit causes the pupil to dilate.

E. H. JELLINEK

CLINICAL NEUROLOGY By Bernard J. Alpers and Elliott L. Mancall. 6th edn. (Pp. 1,072; illustrated; £12.50.) Blackwell: London. 1971.

This is a big book: 1,000 pages of text and 70 pages of index. The authors recommend it for students and general practitioners. It is about the right size for the

non-specialist who is keenly interested in neurology, and it provides a discursive analysis of all the common conditions and many rare disorders. It assumes little previous or practical knowledge. It is, however, much too cumbersome and prolix for the medical student. In the welter of information, the principles and mechanisms of normal and abnormal neurological function do not stand clear.

This is the sixth edition of *Clinical Neurology* and during its lifetime there have been many changes in attitude and practice. The revision of any book presents considerable problems and it would be churlish to dismiss it with some slighting remarks based on one or two details which do not reflect current thought. Some sections are particularly good—for example, the chapter on epilepsy—but in general it has an old-fashioned air. It provides conventional information about most neurological diseases and it would have been thoroughly acceptable five or 10 years ago.

It was not the authors' intention that this book should be a reference for the practising neurologist. Its size and style probably ensure its place in the American pattern of medical education, but for wide acceptance in Britain it has neither the brevity and clarity required by the student nor the comprehensiveness and detail which a neurologist might demand.

IVAN T. DRAPER

## NOTICES

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR PAEDIATRIC NEUROSURGERY The first scientific meeting of this newly formed Society will be held in conjunction with the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies, Tokyo, Japan, 1973. Details from Dr. Satoshi Matsumoto, Kobe University, Chairman, Department of Neurosurgery, 12 Kusumoki-cho 7 Chome, Ikuta-ku, Kobe, Japan.

SIXTH SYMPOSIUM OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN STEREOENCEPHALOTOMY 12, 13 October 1973, Keidanren-Hall, Otemachi, Tokyo, following Fifth International Congress of Neurological Surgeons, 7–12 October 1973, Tokyo. Programme will cover various topics in human stereoencephalotomy and related fields. Official language: English. Details from Professor H. Narabayashi, Neurology Department, Juntendo University, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo, Japan.