Unfortunately the order cannot be relied upon. Thus, the section upon examination (chapter 5) begins with the 'ice water test' and 'sphincterometry' and only later in the chapter is the 'neurologic examination' reached. This arrangement and the descriptions of the tests would not help a neurologist plan the investigation of a patient. A further difficulty is that the sections on clinical disorders are arranged according to the level of neurological lesion involved, which is not helpful for clinicians who may not immediately think in the same way. Indeed some might not even consider the authors' classification valid. Multiple sclerosis, for example, in spite of the way it can present with acute retention of urine, is discussed under a subsection on disturbances of micturition entitled 'sensory motor neuron lesions' of 'insidious onset'. Oh, for a proper index!

RALPH JOHNSON

SPINAL DYSRAPHISM: SPINA BIFIDA OCCULTA By Michael James and L. P. Lassman. (Pp. 144; illustrated; £4.40.) Butterworths: London. 1971.

This monograph presents the experience of two surgeons who were among the first to recognize the importance of hidden or occult malformations affecting the spinal cord. They learnt how to identify those children whose disability stemmed from such developmental errors, how to investigate them, and when and how to operate upon them. Their work is described in detail in a clear and unpretentious way, so that the reader can at once apply the advice to his own orthopaedic or neurosurgical practice.

After surveying the relevant embryology and pathology, the clinical syndromes, radiological findings, and treatment are dealt with; the major part of the book, however, describes 100 cases with provision of numerous details which will be of great value to other surgeons. Finally, there is the justification for these pioneering efforts—the results of treatment.

There are many photographs of operative findings which assist greatly in understanding lesions which are necessarily unfamiliar to many.

KENNETH TILL

INFLUENCE OF HORMONES ON THE NERVOUS SYSTEM Edited by D. H. Ford. (Pp. 503; illustrated; £13.85.) Karger: Basel. 1971.

The International Society of Psychoneuroendocrinology was founded in 1969. It was intended to bring together specialists from different fields whose common interests centred on the function of the nervous system and its relationship with endocrinology.

The technology for investigating the influence of

endocrine secretions on the nervous system, and *vice versa*, has quickly outrun the clinical correlations. The recognition and isolation of the effects of hormones on the developing or mature brain is currently derived from radioimmune assay techniques. It appears that all neurones have the ability to accumulate hormones and hormones influence the growth and differentiation of the nerve cells. They alter the cellular DNA content and vary their rates of firing. Conversely, stimulation of certain areas of the brain—for example, the hippocampus—facilitates secretion of hormones.

Some disorders which have appeared to be primarily psychogenic, such as anorexia nervosa, are associated with profound chemical and structural changes, and it becomes difficult to be certain which element is the prime factor.

These are the proceedings of the first meeting of the psychoneuroendocrinology group. From these reports the non-specialist gets an idea of the developments in this fascinating area.

IVAN T. DRAPER

THE EXPERIMENTAL BIOLOGY OF BRAIN TUMOURS

Edited by W. M. Kirsch, E. G. Paoletti, and P. Paoletti. (Pp. 667; illustrated; \$42.) Thomas Springfield, Ill.

This is a large but very useful book, being compiled from the contributions of 35 authors. It ranges over the whole aspect of cancer and experimental tumours but it applies itself almost exclusively to the special problems of the gliomas. In the earlier sections there are good authoritative accounts of the experimental production of brain tumours by chemical means, and by viruses, and a good section on the transplantability of brain tumours with particular reference to the special immunological problems posed by the brain.

There is much detailed description of a wide range of biochemical disturbances in the brain tumours, and it comes somewhat of a surprise to the reviewer to discover how much work has in fact been done on the biochemistry of gliomas. Sections on therapeutic possibilities could be particularly useful although in practice chemical therapeutics of brain tumours has turned out to be only a disappointment. Perhaps it might be wiser to pay more attention to the earlier chapter on the changing antigenicity of brain tumours rather than to the chemotherapeutic sections. In the long run, the former is likely to be more useful than the latter.

This book, though expensive, can be thoroughly recommended as a good source-book in a now rapidly growing field.

J. B. CAVANAGH