In pointing out items which appear to have been missed, the reviewer must observe that he has not read both volumes from cover to cover. But this indicates the most serious criticism. A handbook is intended for reference purposes and this is impossible without a comprehensive index and good cross-references. The index is inadequate and cross-references nonexistent.

J. A. SIMPSON

PROGRESS IN NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY Edited by H. Kravensbuhl, P. E. Maspes, and W. H. Sweet. (Pp. 498; illustrated; £18.75.) Karger: Basel. 1971. As advances in knowledge are reported in an ever increasing range of journals the value of the review article increases, provided the reviewer really does cover the field rather than summarize his own work. The preface to this book indicates that authors were clearly instructed to review the literature as well as their own experience and this they have faithfully done. The book, which is the fourth in the series, deals with surgically treatable congenital lesions of the central nervous system and the contributors are from North America (six), Europe (six), and New Zealand. A particular value of the book is the access it gives to work not readily available in English language journals—none of the European contributors is British or Scandinavian. Half the chapters deal with cranial and half with spinal conditions—including the use of angiography for estimating ventricular size in infants and in diagnosing spinal arteriovenous malformations; myelomeningocele, diastematomyelia, spondylolisthesis, dermal sinuses (cranial and spinal), intracranial arachnoid cysts, and of course, hydrocephalus. As many of the conditions described are relatively uncommon, it is useful to have the literature so fully reviewed in one place. The book is beautifully produced but far too lavishly illustrated. A more critical attitude to the real value of the illustrations in advancing the argument might have enabled a more economical production. Previous volumes have cost, in Swiss francs, 64 (1966), 85 (1968), 95 (1969); this one costs 175 Swiss francs (£18.75), which represents exponential inflation. Maybe doctors in the Common Market can afford this, but in Britain even libraries will find this a steep price.

BRYAN JENNETT

PRINCIPLES, PRACTICES AND POSITIONS IN NEUROPSYCHIATRIC RESEARCH By J. V. Brady and W. J. H. Nauta. (Pp. 548; illustrated; £8.) Pergamon: Oxford. 1972.

Most of the papers contained in this volume were presented at a conference held in 1970 to mark the retirement, after 20 years, of David Rioch as

Director of the Neuropsychiatry Division of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Washington, D.C.

Reflecting Rioch's broad interests, as seen in his own career and in the research he encouraged in his colleagues, the contributions cover so wide a field that the editors' evident difficulty in finding an arresting title is well understood. Twenty-six papers deal with the neuroanatomy of the cerebral cortex and thalamus, receptor and sensory physiology, the neurochemistry and physiology of reward systems, invertebrate physiology, sleep, neuropsychology, psychosomatics, primate behaviour, military and administrative psychiatry. Many of the authors are eminent and the authority of their contributions need not therefore be doubted. They have clearly been allowed to decide freely the character of their offerings. Some have taken the opportunity to indulge their current speculations at some length: the brevity of others suggests perhaps that they are weary of reporting their work yet again. Some papers are terse and technical and some are readable general reviews. Most of the material has been published before, often in similar form.

It is difficult to know what readership the publishers have in mind apart from those to whom a commemorative volume would have a special value. The broad scope of this collection and the technical nature of many of the papers render this volume of little interest to anyone (at least as a prospective purchaser) but the neurobiological dilettante or the Meyerian gourmet, if such individuals still exist. Libraries probably already have these papers in Volume 8 of the *Journal of Psychiatric Research*. It seems that this book must be placed in that increasingly common category—unnecessary publication.

R. N. HERRINGTON

MENTAL RETARDATION: Occasional Papers, 2, 3, and 4 By K. S. Holt, S. Hewett, E. Stephen, and J. Robertson. (Pp. 172; illustrated; £2.50.) Butterworth: London. 1973.

This volume comprises three papers, all of which bring much needed light to different facets of the urgent problems of mental handicap.

Dr. Holt writes on the quality of survival, summarizing historical trends in maternal and child health and putting existing problems into perspective. He writes not just as a paediatrician and postulates how quality of survival might be altered given the necessary effort. The language is precise, informative, and articulate. My sole complaint is that this paper should have been half again as long.

Dr. Sheila Hewett discusses 'the need for long-term care'. Her straightforward, warm hearted and