

one in which the comprehensibility and applicability of linguistics are most likely to be lost to the clinician.

This collection of papers is, therefore, an assurance to the clinician who has some prior knowledge of psycholinguistics, that clear, clinically relevant, research is being done in the United Kingdom, and that psychometric techniques are being devised to forge an organic link between diagnosis and treatment.

The papers consist of paediatric/psychological research reports and rich review articles of the fields of cognition, teaching, and communication. The content of the papers and discussions emphasizes how the training and the teaching of the mentally handicapped is becoming increasingly technological and precise; but there is no risk in this book of the clinician becoming prematurely biased in favour of either 'behaviourism' or 'cognitive' psychology.

We are becoming increasingly aware of the intricacy and spontaneity of the child's language development and of the universality of the linguistic devices he uses. At several points in the book the importance of the development of the two word utterance is reiterated. Once the child has learned to string two words together he has crossed a language watershed and the prognosis if he is mentally handicapped seems less grave. Further reports by the authors of these papers are eagerly awaited.

This is one of the more valuable, optimistic and practical books in this series, but, like others in the series, the cost is high for such a slim volume.

W. I. FRASER

PITUITARY TUMOURS By J. S. Jenkins. (Pp. 206; illustrated; £5.) Butterworth: London. 1973.

Collaboration is the basic principle in this book, and the result is the production of a concise monograph packed with valuable yet integrated information. Dr. Jenkins himself deals most efficiently with the anatomy and physiology of the pituitary gland, the clinical manifestations of pituitary tumours, and the endocrinological assessment and management of patients. And there he stops, because he has invited a pathologist (Dr. M. R. Crompton), an ophthalmologist (Dr. P. J. Holmes Sellors), a neuroradiologist (Dr. J. A. Ambrose), a neurosurgeon (Mr. A. E. Richardson), and a radiotherapist (Dr. H. J. G. Bloom) to write chapters on particular aspects of pituitary tumours. Thus every chapter is based on the writer's personal and very considerable experience and, as an extra bonus, each one is written clearly and concisely. Anyone involved in the management of tumours of the pituitary gland should find this a most useful book.

J. HUME ADAMS

BRAIN'S CLINICAL NEUROLOGY 4th edn Revised by Roger Bannister. (Pp. 439; illustrated; boards edn £4.80; paperback £3.00.) Oxford University Press: London. 1973.

This is the fourth edition of this deservedly popular and reasonably priced textbook. There have been a few additions of a brief nature such as diseases due to 'slow virus' infection. With rising costs it will be necessary to prune future editions to keep this book good value for money and, therefore, popular with undergraduates. Perhaps the chapter on poliomyelitis could be shortened. Eleven lines for the vasovagal attacks of Gower seems excessive when neuralgia amyotrophy receives only seven!

J. H. D. MILLAR

MENTAL RETARDATION—ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS: Symposia 9, 10, and 11 By Barbara E. Clayton. (Pp. 112; illustrated; £2.50.) Butterworths: London. 1973.

This small book comprises a series of papers delivered at three symposia at the Middlesex Hospital in 1971 and 1972. Interdisciplinary conferences and symposia are fashionable at present. They are often stimulating for the participants and no one would quarrel with their aims. But must the papers inevitably be published in book form especially when there is no real unity of theme despite a single title?

Elek and Dudgeon discuss the role of viruses in aetiology and, with such authorities, the interest and the quality of the papers is guaranteed. Clarke and Adinolfi are selective and critical in materno-foetal incompatibility, while Goldberg and Bicknell deal with lead poisoning. The discussions which followed the papers are fully reported.

There are many intriguing facts in these symposia which contain a substantial amount of relevant data clearly and concisely presented. The book is admirably produced and edited by Barbara Clayton. It should interest many clinicians working with the mentally handicapped and is a model of how symposium procedures should be published. It is recommended without reservation.

R. C. MACGILLIVRAY

THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE BRAIN By John C. Eccles. (Pp. 238; illustrated; £1.95.) McGraw-Hill: Maidenhead. 1973.

This book is about the properties of neurones, synaptic mechanisms, the control of movement, and the embryology of the central nervous system. The embryological chapter contains some very good pages on memory. There is a final philosophical chapter with which I am out of sympathy. At least the first five chapters are well-written and interesting,

packed with important facts, and well argued to conclusions wherever there is an argument that can be stated concisely. Where an argument exists but is too long to deserve a place in a small book, Professor Eccles usually states the conclusion dogmatically, which I think is the right (because transparent) policy. Only occasionally does he dress up a shaky or incomplete argument to make it look better than it is. For a few of the dogmatic statements I wish references had been given—for example, that excitatory and inhibitory synapses can be distinguished by electronmicroscopy (p. 8), and that the inhibitory transmitters of the mammalian CNS are glycine and γ -aminobutyric acid (p. 81). These statements have for some years been defensible but not proven; it would be useful to be told what new work has now established them as certain.

G. S. BRINDLEY

TRANSACTIONS OF THE AMERICAN NEUROLOGICAL ASSOCIATION 1972 Vol. 97. Edited by Samuel A. Trufant. (Pp. 392; \$13.50.) Springer: New York, 1973.

This volume is the record of the 97th Annual Meeting of the American Neurological Association held in Chicago in June 1972.

Forty-nine papers with their consequent discussions are printed verbatim, together with Dr. Paul Bucy's presidential address and the Foster Elting Bennett Memorial Lecture given on that occasion by Dr. Julius Metrakos. Paul Bucy's address is analytical and critical of American neurological practice, and makes an eloquent plea for the need to continue the education of the clinical neurologist after he has been trained. Busy clinicians in Britain may sigh wistfully over that.

Julius Metrakos's lecture on the theory and practice of medical genetics in neurology fulfills part at least of that need. It is concise yet wide ranging, challenges clinicians to think in terms of molecular biology and statistics, and holds out prospects of therapy. No neurologist could afford to ignore the message that it conveys.

The papers read and discussed cover a miscellany of subjects. The discussions in particular are full of interest, of pointed questions and of personal experiences, and at times they are very entertaining. Each paper is, of course, quite short, but their publication might have been more useful had a few key references been given after each. Of particular interest are Horwich, Porro, and Posner's contention that subacute sensory neuropathy in the adult is almost pathognomonic of an underlying systemic cancer; Lipton and Teasdall's follow-up study of 34 cases of acute transverse myelopathy in adults, an entity of varied aetiology and prognosis, the poorest results

being related to spinal shock; Wasterlain and Plum's elegant demonstration of the vulnerability of the developing rat brain to seizures; and the interesting observations by Katzman and colleagues on CSF dynamics in presenile dementia.

Abstracts of a further 56 papers 'read by title' are also given. Many of these reflect the intense study of the chemotherapy of Parkinsonism and its complications, and the perhaps swindling role of surgery in this disease. It is always a pleasure to read Miller Fisher's articles, since they usually convey his clinical experiences and judgements so well. His brief query, 'Is pressure on nerves and roots a common cause of pain?' is no exception. Similarly Saba and King's observations on prodromal signs and symptoms of aneurysms leading 'to the diagnosis while many (patients) remain favourable candidates for treatment' deserves emphasis and publicity.

The 1972 *Transactions* offer a splendid package of what is currently going round in American neurological circles.

IAN D. MELVILLE

PATHOLOGY OF MENTAL RETARDATION By L. Crome and J. Stern. (Pp. 544; illustrated; £9.) Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh, 1972.

The first edition of this book was so well received by clinicians and pathologists that one would not expect many radical changes. The second edition, however, is more than 100 pages larger than the first, there is an extremely useful additional chapter incorporating synopses of some 200 syndromes, a wealth of new material has been added, and the bibliography has been greatly expanded. Indeed, it is probably as up to date as any book of this type can be. One of its great assets is that the authors, experts in the fields of pathology and biochemistry respectively, clearly have such wide-ranging clinical interests that they can write authoritatively on all aspects of mental retardation. It can be recommended as the standard textbook on the pathology of mental retardation without hesitation, and one that should be of interest to anyone who encounters cases of mental retardation.

J. HUME ADAMS

NOTICE

THIRD INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN PEDIATRIC NEUROLOGY AND NEUROSURGERY 27 February–2 March 1974, Mexico City. Details from Dr. Fernando Rueda-Franco, Neurology and Neurosurgery Service, Hospital Del Nino IMAN, Av. Insurgentes Sur 3700-C, Mexico 22, D.F. (Mexico).