phrenia. Detailed accounts are given of the speech and language disorders in each case transcribed from multiple tape recordings. Temporal parameters of speech included words per minute, percent spontaneous speech, the dark:light ratio, frequency of repetition, the answer:question ratio, the number of different words in the first 500, Zipf curves, and the 10 most frequent words. Language was analysed with respect to its semantic, syntactical, and phonological components. Comparison of the results and cross correlations are made, and the factors limiting evaluation and interpretation are stressed.

The conclusions are '(1) Normal perceptual mechanisms of vision and audition are instrumental in the release of speech, and with dissolution of language function, these perceptual mechanisms become increasingly effective and evocative of increasingly stereotyped speech behaviour. . . . (2) Rules of grammar derived from analysis of normal language apply in decreasing amount as language deteriorates. These rules are not replaced by specific grammars of pathological language but are operative in differing degree at all levels of language production, with the structure of the product representative of the level of neurological function. . . .'

The book is useful for the distinction drawn between speech and language, and the methods of linguistic analysis in the organic and psychotic disorders will be of interest to neurologists and others concerned with brain mechanisms and their disruption. But those looking for a text that is easy to read and understand will be disappointed, unless the present reviewer's struggle with this monograph merely reflects his own neurolinguistic shortcomings.

MICHAEL ESPIR

CENTRAL PROCESSING OF VISUAL INFORMATION PART B: VISUAL CENTRES IN THE BRAIN Edited by R. Jung. (Pp. 738; illustrated; DM. 248), and **VISUAL PSYCHOPHYSICS** Edited by Dorothea Jameson and L. M. Hurvich. (Pp. 812; illustrated; DM. 248.) Parts 3 and 4 of Vol. VII. **HANDBOOK OF SENSORY PHYSIOLOGY**. Springer: Berlin. 1973.

These two volumes of the *Handbook* form a set with earlier volumes (VII/1 and VII/2) on the physiology of vision. *Central Visual Information B* is the main part of the set dealing with the function and structure of the visual centres in the brain stem and cerebral hemispheres. *Visual Psychophysics* gives good summaries of the problems of visual sensitivity, acuity, adaptation, eye-movements, and spatial localization, flicker, colour-vision, and colour deficiencies.

This series is possibly too esoteric for clinical purposes but it is required reading for experimenters

on visual evoked potentials, image stabilization, etc. Simplistic views of central visual functions and oculomotor control are just not good enough.

J. A. SIMPSON

BRAIN DAMAGE AND MENTAL RETARDATION 2nd edn By J. L. Khanna. (Pp. 227; \$8.75.) Thomas: Springfield, Ill. 1973.

This book is a revised edition of a collection of papers first published in 1966. These papers were presented initially at an 'institute' held at the University of Tennessee, on problems of mental retardation with reference to brain damage. The nine chapters—unfortunately, only two of which have been brought up to date—deal with widely differing topics, ranging from a most astute examination of conceptual issues in the evaluation of brain damage, by Dr. Alan Ross, to an all too brief account of problems in the evaluation of residual effects of head injury, by Dr. R. W. Mackey. In general, although many of the chapters are interesting and stimulating, the link between the title of the institute and the content of the chapters is often tenuous in the extreme. This is particularly noticeable in the chapter by Dr. W. Quast on the role of interpretative parent interview in the diagnosis of children, where the problems posed by brain damage and mental retardation are dealt with by ignoring them. In the chapter by Dr. Reitan on the psychological assessment of deficits associated with brain lesions, the topic of brain damage is dealt with in his usual highly competent manner, whereas problems of mental retardation are barely mentioned.

At \$8.75 (no British price is quoted) this book is reasonable value for money, although not as up-to-date as one would like to have seen. It will provide useful reading for all those involved in the diagnosis, assessment, and management of the mentally retarded.

D. NEIL BROOKS

NOTICES

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON CONTROLLED TRIALS OF ANTI-EPILEPTIC DRUGS Held by Danish Epilepsy Society, Copenhagen, 13 September 1974. Apply to Dr. Mogens Dam, Department of Neurology, Rigshospitalet, Blegdamsvej, DK 2100 Copenhagen, Denmark.

IVth WORLD CONGRESS OF PSYCHIATRIC SURGERY Madrid, 7–10 September 1975, organized by International Society of Psychiatric Surgery. Details from President, Dr. S. Obrador, or Secretaries, Dr. J. G. Martin-Rodriguez and Dr. J. Santo-Domingo, Apartado Postal 46142, Madrid, Spain.