

Book reviews

SELECTED PAPERS ON LANGUAGE AND THE BRAIN By Norman Geschwind. (Pp. 549; illustrated; Dfl. 125; U.S. \$39.50.) Reidel: Dordrecht. Holland. 1974.

It must be difficult to work in neurology without having some interest and personal views on speech and its disturbances, but it is to Norman Geschwind and his collaborators that we owe the present active interest in aphasiology, and in the disconnection theories of Liepmann, stimulated by the split-brain experiments of Sperry and his co-workers. This book, volume 16 of the *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, gathers together the best of Professor Geschwind's papers up to 1973. Particularly valuable are the introductory notes placing papers in the context of his developing views, and of papers subsequent to their original publication. This is a beautiful book which the reviewer finds necessary for frequent referral.

J. A. SIMPSON

SILENT LANGUAGE By Macdonald Critchley (Pp. 231; illustrated; £9.50.) Butterworths: London. 1975.

Facial and manual gesture enhance oral communication. In conversation, direct visual contact will reveal nuances of meaning which might otherwise remain hidden. Similarly, the hearer's gestural signals will indicate to the speaker whether or not his meaning has been understood. This constitutes what is largely subconscious silent language. In the theatre, in rhetoric, and in various private sectors of society gestural language has become conscious and formulated. In some instances it is used as a means of secret communication, in others it has become an art form.

Dr Critchley, the doyen of aphasiologists, has prepared a Baedeker to the unspoken forms of language. He touches briefly upon the cortical localization of gesture and discusses the disorders of these supplementary forms of communication in various diseases. He also explores the relationship between gesture and speech. In the major part of the book he systematically surveys and analyses the subconscious and conscious gestures of social intercourse, painting, drama, dance, occult symbolism, mythology, secret societies, and so on.

The book is enlivened by some fascinating illustrations, and, like Alfred Hitchcock, Dr Critchley appears incognito in various roles. Without be-

littling the serious purpose of the work, its sheer enjoyableness must not be neglected. It is a book into which one can dip repeatedly, and this is a credit to Dr Critchley's light touch; the argument is illuminated by wide ranging examples which reflect his scholarship and taste. He appears to be equally familiar with the hand language of the Balinese temple dancer, and with the signals of the tick-tack man at the dogtrack.

IVAN T. DRAPER

THE MANAGEMENT OF EPILEPSY By R. B. Aird and D. M. Woodbury. (Pp. 448; illustrated; \$17.75.) Thomas: Springfield, Ill. 1974.

The epilepsies, like the poor, are always with us. Those who have worked in special clinics for the epileptic disorders over many years may be forgiven for thinking at times that they seem to have to run hard just to stay in the same place. They may even suspect that they retropulse a little from time to time. The riches that this particular volume bring to the subject deserve full notice. So much of value and utility has been compressed into 450 pages, ranging from a profound analysis of the epilepsy problem at neuronal circuit level and at the neurochemical level, to a detailed analysis of the pharmacology of the anti-epileptic drugs. The latter would, of course, be expected from any publication bearing the Woodbury name. The emphasis which is placed on the brain circuits involved in seizure discharge, and not merely on the site of origin of discharge, is a foremost consideration in the book.

The chapter on comprehensive management of the individual patient is commendable. It is appropriate to be reminded that it is people with seizures, and not cases of epilepsy or even EEGs, that are to be managed. All physicians and surgeons involved with epilepsy are adjured to have awareness of the limitations of drug treatment, and of the hazards of drug treatment, and not to pitch their therapeutic expectations too high. Some often neglected points of medical therapy are well reviewed.

The book is easy to manage even if the style is a little compressed at times. There is a scatter of misprints including one which destroyed the sense of a sentence completely. The statistics of the book include a 141 item glossary of terms, a list of upwards of 600 references up to 1972, and a 17 page index. This is an excellent review of the subject which will benefit workers in both clinical and research