

research workers will wish to study this book which, at the price, they will have to borrow from libraries.

D. DOYLE

NEUROLOGICAL AND SENSORY DISORDERS IN THE ELDERLY Edited by William S. Fields. (Pp. 244; illustrated; \$19.50.) Stratton: New York. 1975.

Proceedings of symposia, with verbatim accounts of discussion following individual papers, have advantages and disadvantages. In this book there are good formal papers by well-known American neurologists, and glimpses of informality and humour in discussion so often lacking in original presentations. On the other hand, such a book takes a long time to compile, and by its publication there is much that is out of date. It is not clear when the symposium was held but some clue comes from speakers saying they were looking forward to the time when the combination of L-dopa with decarboxylase inhibitors became generally available, and that computerised axial tomography might hold promise for the future. How much value is there in using expensive space to describe in discussion an interesting case that the speaker rather inaccurately remembers? The main papers are excellent, with notable contributions on the neurological complications of skeletal disease in the aged, and the degree to which strokes should be investigated, and the potential for prevention and treatment. It is good to see aspirin recommended in selected patients in place of conventional anticoagulants, but astonishing to read that a physician of one's own vintage considered that before penicillin very few people lived beyond 60 (and not surprising that several pages are taken up disputing this!) It is a very interesting book, and well worth reading, and perhaps it is unfair that the best remembered paragraph defines a 'rich' (as opposed to a well-to-do) American as one with a place in Florida, a Caribbean island, at least one Lear Jet aircraft, and enough Cadillacs to stand on while washing it.

EDWIN R. BICKERSTAFF

THE LIMBIC SYSTEM By Robert L. Isaacson. (Pp. 292; illustrated; \$17.94.) Plenum: New York. 1974. The author disarms criticism by devoting a preface to describing his bias towards destructive lesions and electrophysiological studies on the rat and cat, and in his selection of references. Within these limits, he has provided a useful summary of the structure and function of the limbic system (in which he includes the hypothalamus, hippocampus and its septal area) for advanced students in psychology and the neurosciences. References to human studies are scanty but in general the limbic system is equated with the

'paleomammalian' brain of MacLean, and considered to have inhibitory control over the fundamental core 'protoreptilian' brain, an inhibition which he conceives as being necessary for development of learning sets—or forgetting of previously learned sets (a concept for which there is some evidence from human studies). The hippocampus can be seen as a mechanism which suppresses 'innate' or early learned responses when the unexpected happens. The amygdala is seen as accentuating the conditions of arousal and activation of the hypothalamic systems when external conditions are appropriate, a function in some ways opposed to those of the hippocampus. The neocortical brain anticipates the future. It extrapolates from the past experience of the limbic system with the valuable storage device of language.

The more conservative reader will reject the interpretations, but some conceptual schema is useful for storing and correlating data. This book is quite helpful from that point of view.

J. A. SIMPSON

PRIMATE MODELS OF NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS (*Advances In Neurology*, Volume 10) Edited by

B. S. Meldrum and C. D. Marsden. (Pp. 362; illustrated; \$25.95) Raven Press: New York. 1975.

Attitudes towards research on subhuman primates have recently altered. There has been a general hardening in the reactions towards the use of primates for experimental purposes unless the results could not readily be obtained in a non-primate species. Furthermore, for a variety of reasons, the availability of wild-trapped animals has become increasingly uncertain and there are genuine fears of an ecological nature as to the consequences of large scale trapping of some species. A switch to purpose-bred animals may become desirable, and if so, would have far reaching consequences, not least in financial terms and in the time required before such breeding facilities could be established. The devotion of volume 10 of *Advances In Neurology* to an examination of the value of primate models of neurological disorders is therefore appropriate. It is based on a symposium held at the Institute of Psychiatry, London, in 1974, which was devoted to an assessment of the achievements of primate research in this field.

The contributions cover a wide range of topics and have been grouped into four sections, depending upon subject matter: motor disorders, epilepsy, cerebrovascular disease, metabolism and degenerative disorders, and virus diseases. It is not possible in a short review to detail individual contributions, but in general these are authoritative accounts by individuals directly involved in neurological research

with primates.

Dr B. S. Meldrum contributes the final chapter in which he provides an interesting and useful synthesis of the problems and potentialities for future research on primate models of neurological disease, emphasising that such studies should only be undertaken if no appropriate non-primate model is available and if clinical benefit is likely to result. There are clearly many areas where this applies, such as in relation to the pathogenesis of involuntary movements, and in the investigation of neurological disorders of obscure causation that may prove to be due to transmissible agents in the way that has been established for kuru and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

There has been an increasing tendency for conference proceedings to be published in book form, sometimes producing expensive volumes of limited usefulness. This stricture cannot be levelled against the present volume which is a valuable and timely contribution to the neurological literature.

P. K. THOMAS

**STUDIES ON NEUROMUSCULAR DISEASES** Edited by Klaus and John E. Desmedt. (Pp. 229; illustrated; £22.10.) Karger: Basel. 1975.

This book, the proceedings of a symposium in Giessen, 1973, is published in the same style as the three volume Brussels treatise reviewed in Vol. 37, p. 199, and is intended to be a continuation volume. The symposium was on quantitative methods of investigations in neuromuscular diseases, and so includes histological and biochemical as well as electrophysiological methods.

Like most symposia it is a mixture of good and bad, new and old. The section on peripheral nerves is excellent and that on myasthenia hardly worth publishing. Indeed, some of the papers would not pass the editorial committee of a journal. This is, perhaps, the most important criticism of published proceedings in general. However, the good parts are very good, and will be consulted by serious workers, but it must be said that they do not justify the extremely high price.

J. A. SIMPSON

**PRACTICAL MANAGEMENT OF EYE PROBLEMS** By F. H. Roy. (Pp. 217; illustrated; £4.75). Lea and Febiger: Philadelphia. 1975.

This book considers three aspects of ophthalmology—namely, glaucoma, strabismus, and visual fields. The introduction emphasises that 'The physician (ophthalmologist) is not an oracle of knowledge, but a guidance system,' and this book contains some of these guide lines. The book is comprised of lists of symptoms, signs, causes, and treatments; and each section is followed by a comprehensive bibliography.

There is no discussion and limited description of examination techniques so that this book is aimed at the busy and experienced ophthalmologist. The information contained is on the whole accurate, and, if a patient conforms to the categorisation, the ophthalmologist can be satisfactorily guided.

M. SAUNDERS

**LE MALATTIE DEL MONOTONEURONE PERIFERICO E DELLA MUSCOLATURE NELL' INFANZIA E NELLA ADOLESCENZA** By Silvio Fasullo. (Pp. 279; price not stated.) Scuola Grafica Salesiana: Palermo. 1975.

This book is a rather dry and pedestrian catalogue of the peripheral neuropathies and neuromuscular disorders affecting infants and children. While trying to be completely comprehensive and including, for example, the whole range of causes of peripheral neuropathy, both rare and common, it suffers as a result from being rather superficial with no critical discussion or personal experience of the author. A bibliography is included with each chapter, and is on the whole reasonably comprehensive. However, some potentially interesting historical references such as Freke (1740) and Copping and Clarke (1738) in the section on myositis ossificans are missing from the bibliography, while others (Munchmeyer, 1869) have been obtained second-hand ('cited from Joppich and Schulte'). Most of the information in this book is available in more palatable form from other texts on the subject.

VICTOR DUBOWITZ

**NEUROPATHOLOGY CASE STUDIES** By S. S. Schochet and W. F. McCormick. (Pp. 315; illustrated; £9.75.) Kimpton: London. 1976.

This is one of a series of books of case studies. Cases are based on biopsy or necropsy material and are arranged in the following order: clinical data, eight or nine multiple choice questions on the data, answers and discussion followed by a list of up-to-date key references. All are illustrated, by macroscopic photographs, photomicrographs and occasional electron micrographs. Most of the figures are of good or adequate quality, but a few pictures of brains are poorly reproduced.

The idea behind this series is sound, and there is much to be learnt or revised by young pathologists approaching neuropathology, established neuropathologists and consultants in the neurological sciences. No less than 60 patients are discussed, suffering from common conditions like cerebral infarction, infections, and tumours to rare eponymous conditions like Krabbe's, Hurler and Pompe's disease, and Zellweger's syndrome. The multiple choice questions form the basis for