

NEUROTRASMETTITORI E TERMOREGOLAZIONE By G. Nistico and E. Marley. (Pp. 47; illustrated; price not stated.) *Acta Neurologica*: Naples. 1974.

This is a reprint of a paper published in *Acta Neurologica*, 1974. It is primarily a review of experimental studies on the control of body temperature and the specific role of some regions of the central nervous system on thermoregulation. This paper is clearly written in Italian, and includes a considerable number of references from 1949 to 1972 with only few more recent publications. Appropriate credit has been given to the authors who identified thermosensitive neurones in the region which is often called 'the hypothalamic thermostat'. A number of pharmacological investigations is discussed, including some of the authors' personal research in domestic fowl, on aminergic control of temperature, as well as the role of prostaglandin E in inducing fever. This article is of 47 pages, of which 9½ pages are of references. A brief summary in English is also included.

G. PAMPIGLIONE

NEUROLOGIE: GRUNDLAGEN UND KLINIK Edited by J. Quandt and J. Sommer. (Pp. 1024; illustrated; price not stated.) Thieme: Leipzig. 1974.

This large East-German text has 24 authors, including two Austrians and two Swiss, and although the two editors are authors, or coeditors, of half the 36 sections the reader is conscious of the multiplicity of hands, particularly in the clinical part. Neurophysiology is excellent, and the radiological chapter is beautifully illustrated. Unfortunately, the radiographs elsewhere in the book are poorly reproduced.

The general impression is of over-tabulation, including two pages of the various cerebrospinal fluid findings in named patients, complete with diagnoses. The chapter on dementia is mostly descriptive neuropathology, and one misses a discussion of the clinical investigations of these difficult cases. There is nothing on the surgical relief of disorders of CSF circulation in this context, and while Gardner features in the references there is no mention of his treatment of syringomyelia in the text. An interesting observation states that multiple sclerosis has doubled in incidence since the start of the century, but the supposed prevalence of 1% should surely be divided by ten?

The text ranges from neuroanatomy to neuro-rehabilitation, and is designed for the training of neuropsychiatrists, as well as neurologists: indeed, the senior editor makes a spirited plea against further separation, and warns against the dangers of the 'neurological vacuum' in the practice of psychiatry.

E. H. JELLINEK

NEUROLOGY OF INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD By S. Carter and A. P. Gold. (Pp. 216; illustrated; £14.60.) Prentice/Hall: New York. 1974.

The explosion of interest in paediatric neurology has brought with it a demand for updated texts, as well as systematic training programmes. This may be partly the reason for the decision to separate off a neurological section from a general paediatric text, and present it as an independent book. This account provides a useful unfussy synopsis, with especially good sections on congenital defects and infections, but it has not shed its abbreviated parent format. The section on degenerative diseases is disappointingly outdated, and inevitably there are differences in emphasis which reflect the transatlantic origin (apart from the price). The tautological confusion about the nature of febrile convulsions is prescribed in classical form.

J. WILSON

NOTICE

NEUROSURGERY THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE 10-14 May 1976: Tenth International Symposium. Details from the organizers: Registrar, Department of Neurosurgery and The Page and William Black Postgraduate School of Medicine, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Fifth Avenue and 100th Street, New York, N.Y. 10029, U.S.A.

Letter

MYASTHENIA GRAVIS; THYMIC HISTOLOGY AND RESPONSE TO THYMECTOMY

SIR,—The paper of Dr. Sambrook and his associates (1976) detailing the results of Manchester Royal Infirmary for thymectomy in myasthenia gravis is interesting. It is apparent that they believe that there is a correlation between the presence of numerous thymic germinal centres and a favourable response to thymectomy. The widely varying results obtained by various groups to date are summarised in the Table.

Several factors may account for the divergent findings: