Book reviews

An Introduction to Neurosurgery Third Edition By Bryan Jennett. (Pp. 366; illustrated; £9.95.) Heinemann Medical Books: London. 1977.

This is the third edition of an excellent small textbook which covers a wide range of neurosurgical topics and would be ideal for medical students, the newly qualified, and neurosurgical trainees at the start of their careers. Although the text is concise it is, as one would expect, an easy book to read. An important feature is the addition to each chapter of a short bibliography and this would apply particularly to neurosurgical trainees.

The approach to the subject is a very practical one, describing what could be expected from the history and clinical findings and what is then available by special investigation. As is proper in an introduction to the subject, more controversial topics are not dealt with. The chapters on the pathology, natural history, and the management of the head-injured patient will prove of special value to the newly qualified doctor who is not working in a neurosurgical department and yet is often called upon to deal with such cases in casualty departments. This book can be strongly recommended and fulfils its purpose admirably.

JOHN HANKINSON

Paediatric Neurosurgery By Thomas H. Milhorat. (Pp. 398; illustrated; \$35.00.) F. A. Davis: Philadelphia. 1978.

"The discipline of paediatric neurosurgery has evolved rapidly in recent years." With these words Professor Milhorat introduces his new book *Paediatric Neurosurgery*. Few would disagree, and an addition to the relatively few texts on the place of surgery in the care of children with disorders of the central nervous system is welcome. This is such a concise and eminently readable account too. It is well illustrated, particularly with examples of computerised axial tomography indicating the importance of this investigation in many of the conditions discussed. The bibliography at the end of each chapter is full, allowing for further

study. In 12 chapters, the author discusses the management of most conditions encountered in a paediatric neurosurgical practice. His concise but comprehensive descriptions stem from wide experience, which is occasionally underlined by appropriate case histories. There is plenty of practical advice. The management of infected shunts and of the troublesome venous lacunae encountered at operation in the posterior fossa dura mater of the infant are examples. However, he is no mere technician—normal neurological development, the role of alpha foeto protein in prenatal diagnoses, and the place of "drastic surgical intervention" are all discussed. Nevertheless this remains essentially a very good practical guide to paediatric neurosurgeons. It is invidious to select a particular chapter for mention. Not unexpectedly, in view of the author's well-known contributions, hydrocephalus and its treatment are lucidly described but others will prefer the accounts of vascular disorders or of posterior fossa tumours. Criticisms are minor and in the realms of personal opinion upon facets of treatment. I have no doubt that Professor Milhorat has more than achieved his aim "to provide an introduction to the neurosurgery of infancy and childhood for medical students, residents, and clinicians involved in the care of paediatric patients." Paediatric neurologists can refresh themselves on the place of surgery. He offers invaluable experience to paediatric neurosurgeons. In stating many of the principles and practices of the specialty he could be read with profit by all neurosurgeons—trained or in training.

J. F. SHAW

Architectonics of the Cerebral Cortex Edited by Mary A. B. Brazier and Hellmuth Petsche. (Pp. 465; illustrated; \$45.00.) Raven Press: New York. 1977. This book is the third of the important International Brain Research Organisation's Monograph Series. It is based on a symposium held in Vienna in 1976, 100 years after the birth of von Economo whose epoch-making *Cytoarchitectonics of the Human Cerebral*

Cortex (1925) is seen as one of the great landmarks in interpretation of the functional anatomy of the brain. The book begins fittingly with an appreciation of von Economo and a scholarly account of the earlier contributions to architectonics in the nineteenth century.

Thereafter, the book is a goldmine of information on the most modern positions on a wide variety of topics. It is difficult to be selective, but no one interested in any way in the study of brains, alive or otherwise, will be able to resist a browse. Forty-one authors have been chosen as world leaders to present electronmicroscopy, Golgi studies, dendritic analyses, and cytochemical studies of cortical areas while discussing functional and developmental theory. There is an excellent section on regional variations in blood flow. Several electrophysiological studies probe the origins and significance of EEG phenomena, the physiology of the interplay of association areas, and the electrical events of sleep.

The depth of scholarship in all of the well-referenced contributions cannot be conveyed readily when there is such an apparent variety of subject matter. All the contributions, however, are directed towards the elucidation of the architectonic basis of their areas, and the exercise which the authors have taken up makes this book the more readable and all the wider in its appeal.

DAVID DOYLE

Transactions of the American Neurological Association 1977 Edited by Peritz Scheinberg. (Pp. 209; £23.00 USA, \$26.20 elsewhere.) Springer: New York. 1978.

Every year one looks forward to scanning the *Transactions* as an indication of the most active work in the USA before publication of definitive papers. Once again one is not disappointed. Despite the increasing role of the research neuroscientist referred to in the thoughtful presidential address by Professor Plum, it is clear that clinical neurology in the States is as vigorous as ever in its production of new work.

J. A. SIMPSON