

Book reviews

Management of Neurological Disorders

By Bryan Ashworth and Michael Saunders. (Pp. 278; £7.50.) Pitman Medical: Tunbridge Wells, Kent. 1977. This short textbook is written primarily to provide practical guidance to medical students and doctors who are not neurologists. Review appeared best accomplished by some weeks of seeking advice in its pages about current management problems. This book passed the test with honours. Chapters on intensive care and rehabilitation are followed by chapters each devoted to the management of a different category of disease of the nervous system. Brief comment is made concerning the presentation and investigation of the different diseases—inevitably such comment is dogmatic. Drug therapy is discussed in more detail and, if appropriate, comment is made on the value of surgical intervention. Inevitably obsolescence creeps in; for example, diazepam and clonazepam are probably no longer the drugs of choice for status epilepticus now that chlormethiazole is being used increasingly. Adequate lists of references and recommended reading are given. Useful appendices yield necessary information about voluntary organisations, financial and other help. The style is lucid. This book is highly recommended.

W. F. DURWARD

The Motor System: Neurophysiology and Muscle Mechanisms

Edited by Marik Shahani. (Pp. 387; illustrated; price not stated.) Elsevier North-Holland Biomedical Press: Amsterdam. 1977. Many symposia proceedings masquerade as textbooks though containing only the most recent (and possibly transient) contribution of a number of authors, often self-selected and not editorially screened. This book is of a higher order. While not a complete textbook of a very elaborate system, it is remarkably comprehensive and contains some outstandingly good reviews by acknowledged experts. The six sections are (i) muscle, (ii) the motor unit, (iii) afferents, muscle spindles, and central excitation, (iv) reflex physiology, (v) central control of movement, and (vi) organisation of learned movements.

It would be invidious to select one or two chapters for special comment as most of them are so good, forming a very useful guide to the literature. The book is edited by Professor Marik Shahani of Bombay who organised the meeting as a satellite symposium in connection with the 26th International Congress of Physiology held in New Delhi in 1974. He has done both jobs well and the book is of lasting value.

J. A. SIMPSON

Microscopic Analysis of the Anastomoses between the Cranial Nerves

By E. P. E. Bischoff. Translated and edited by Ernest Sachs and Eva W. Valtin. (Pp. ix+138; illustrated; \$13.50.) University Press of New England: Hanover, New Hampshire. 1977. Ernst Philipp Eduard Bischoff, MD, was the son of the director of the Anatomical Institute in Munich. In 1864 he was awarded a prize by the Royal Medical Faculty of Munich for an essay, accompanied by lithographs, entitled *Mikroskopische Analyse der Anastomosen der Kopfnerven*. Two years later this was published in a limited edition, very few copies of which can be traced. This has now been translated by Dr Ernest Sachs and Mrs Eva Valtin, to which a short introductory note and a concluding commentary by Dr Sachs have been added, together with a bibliography of Bischoff's undated references. This is a beautifully produced publication with reproductions of the 109 lithographs illustrating Bischoff's meticulous dissections and the translation of his explanatory discussion, written in a delightful personal, if somewhat ingenuous, style.

Although this book is largely of historical interest, as Dr Sachs emphasises, the existence of these interconnections between the cranial nerves has been neglected in anatomical descriptions. Dr Sachs's interest was first aroused when he became aware of some unusual connections between the nervus intermedius and the seventh and eighth nerves that did not appear in anatomical descriptions, seen when operating with magnifying loupes. The anastomoses illustrated by Bischoff were not, of course, verified histologically as con-

taining nerve fibres, but he was convinced that they were distinguishable from vessels or connective tissue. Dr Sachs makes a number of suggestions as to their possible clinical relevance, including, predictably, various pain syndromes around the head, face, and ear. Perhaps occasional examples of aberrant reinnervation after nerve injury that are difficult to explain in anatomical terms could be added.

P. K. THOMAS

The Shattered Mind—The Person after Brain Damage

By Howard Gardner. (Pp. 481; illustrated; £9.78.) Routledge and Kegan Paul: London. 1977. In this book Dr Gardner presents a fascinating and very well-written account of the intricacies of the higher functions of the brain, basing it upon his extensive experience as a psychologist working with brain-damaged individuals at the Aphasia Research Centre of the Boston University School of Medicine. He illustrates his theme with detailed accounts of patients he has studied, and supports his comments with a penetrating analysis of papers and case reports of others who have worked in the same field. He enriches the book further by commenting on the effects of brain damage on the work of famous artists and other celebrities. In addition to his observations upon the changes in mental functions brought about by damage to different areas of the brain, Dr Gardner raises the interesting question of why the deficits sustained are so often no more than exaggerations of the experiences many normal people have in daily life, and in what way a study of the latter might contribute more to our understanding of the effects of brain injury. The author is far from being a detached and mechanistic observer of his patients whose changes in thinking and emotion and whose resultant frustrations, anxiety, and bewilderment he clearly and sympathetically describes. The changes in relationships between the disabled person and his or her family and friends are highlighted, and should be a reminder to those who deal with the problems of brain-damaged patients that all too often the personal and social con-