

Book reviews

Advanced Medicine—13 Edited by Michael Besser. (Pp. 497; illustrated; £8.50.) Pitman Medical Publishing: Tunbridge Wells, Kent. 1977.

This volume of a well-known series covers a wide field of medicine at an advanced level. While all of it is important and valuable, the main interest for readers of this journal will be part I—Neurology. This contains three excellent chapters by J. Newsom Davis on Myasthenia Gravis; New Ideas, A. Hopkins on Brain Death, and J. D. Parkes on Parkinsonism—New Treatments. They are short chapters but well written and up to date. In part VIII—New Techniques and Treatment—there are also good reviews on The Impact of Computed Transmission Tomography on Cranial Neuroradiology (B. E. Kendall), Lithium—Effects and Side Effects (J. L. Crammer), and Cerebrovascular Disorder: Assessment with Radionuclides (K. E. Britton, C. C. Nimmon, P. H. Jarritt, M. Granowska, T. Y. Lee, and J. M. McAlister). I enjoyed reading all of them and was stimulated to follow up some of the references—surely the purpose of this type of book. The editing and production are impeccable.

J. A. SIMPSON

Visual Evoked Potentials in Man: New Developments Edited by J. E. Desmedt. (Pp. 558; illustrated; £21.00.) Clarendon Press: Oxford. 1977.

This book, with its distinguished, international list of contributors, must surely fulfil its aim of providing a unique source of the current views and state of knowledge in this field of neurophysiology.

There are three sections, covering all aspects of methods of recording and analysis, physiology, and the clinical applications. Many chapters are presented in a scientific format, incorporating experimental methods, results, discussions, and summaries with copious illustrations and graphs.

It is not a book for the beginner, but as a standard reference text in this rapidly advancing subject, it will appeal to physicists, physiologists, and clinicians.

ANNE P. MCGEORGE

Neurological Differential Diagnosis By John Patten. (Pp. 292; illustrated; £14.50.) Harold Starke: London, and Springer-Verlag: Berlin, Heidelberg, New York. 1977.

It is a pleasure to review a new book of clinical neurology knowing that it will run to several editions and become a classic of its genre. This exciting book by Dr John Patten has that something extra which makes it tower above other textbooks of neurology for the novice. The author clearly has a love of, and a great experience in, the teaching of neurology, and presents the salient features of the subject in a clear, logical, and organised way. The illustrations are superb and ideally complement the text. Indeed, it is the illustrations that set this book above others of its kind. For those wishing to learn neurology, undergraduates, those taking higher medical examinations, or for doctors becoming professional neurologists, this book is positively recommended.

P. O. BEHAN

Brain and Heart Infarct Edited by K. J. Zülch, W. Kaufmann, K.-A. Hossman, and V. Hossman. (Pp. 349; illustrated; £29.50, DM 67.00.) Springer-Verlag: Berlin, Heidelberg, New York. 1977.

The purpose of holding this symposium was to examine recent advances in knowledge of infarction of the heart and brain, and to attempt to draw together the threads in pathogenesis common to these two important areas. The reader, who is interested in vascular disease beyond the narrow confines of his speciality, will be disappointed. Only three of the 31 contributions make an attempt to establish common factors in vascular disease in the two circulations. It is true that in the discussion of the papers many of the participants do draw attention to similarities and differences of tissue response but, as with all reported discussions of symposia, these are often inconclusive and incomplete. This is inherent in this type of reporting.

On the credit side, as one might anticipate, the standing of the authors participating in the conference has resulted in authoritative papers, and there are up-to-date accounts of the present

position in their chosen fields of investigation. Therefore, clinicians who wish to keep abreast of recent developments of the effects of vascular disease will find this monograph useful reading, particularly if they are interested at the level of the microcirculation.

The few contributions on treatment are not particularly helpful.

E. C. HUTCHINSON

Pathology of the Spinal Cord Second edition By J. Trevor Hughes. (Pp. 257; illustrated; £7.50.) Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books): London. 1978. To some readers the separation pathologically of the spinal cord and brain may seem arbitrary since similar principles may be applied throughout the central nervous system. However the concept of "selective vulnerability" is particularly applicable to the central nervous system, and certain diseases show a predilection for specific anatomical sites within the nervous system. In this respect the spinal cord deserves special treatment and with this aim the second edition of *Pathology of the Spinal Cord* has been produced.

Dr Hughes has written the text with the clinical neuroscientist and general pathologist in mind, and his chapter on necropsy examination of the spinal cord is especially helpful to the pathologist who encounters technical and interpretative difficulties when examining the spinal cord. The first edition of the book appeared in 1966, and in the second edition there has been a major revision of the text with the addition of a chapter on system degenerations and valuable enlargement of the text on rubella embryopathy, thalidomide-induced deformities, fungal and slow viral infections, and toxins including heroin. The chapter on the blood supply of the spinal cord is particularly useful giving much information that is not available in other texts. Case reports are used to amplify pathological descriptions, and the selected references provide useful sources for those who wish to delve deeper. This moderately priced book is highly recommended.

INGRID V. ALLEN