

sufficient to stimulate and interest psychologists, and to give the non-neurologically sophisticated medical practitioner a refresher.

The meat of the book is contained in chapters 4 to 9 in which the author discusses the neuropsychological dysfunctions observed with lesions of the four cerebral lobes, and then gives an account of hemispheric asymmetry and the principles of neuropsychological examination. Dr Walsh has wisely decided not to include animal studies, and the coverage of the human literature is comprehensive. As far as it is ever possible in a book of this kind, the material is up-to-date, although (to take one area) recent developments in the study of amnesia have already moved beyond the formulation given.

There is no doubt that this book fills a tremendous need. It will become the basis against which future textbooks of neuropsychology will be evaluated, and it will be required reading for many undergraduate and postgraduate psychologists. Neurosurgeons will find much of interest, and I suspect that many neurologists may be discovered reading the book in the privacy of their own consulting rooms. Dr Walsh is to be congratulated.

D. NEIL BROOKS

**Children Living in Long-Stay Hospitals** By Maureen Oswin. (Pp. 159; illustrated; £5.00.) Spastics International Medical Publications, Heinemann: London. 1978.

Over a period of 18 months, Miss Oswin, an experienced teacher, spent her time in the children's wards of eight mental handicap hospitals. Despite the multiplicity of Reports and Working Parties of the past 15 years, her book reveals a continuing chaotic state of affairs. It is a pathetic tale of a shambles of a service, which avoids the usual polemics and philosophical meanderings beloved by people not working in this field.

There is no doubt that the Education Act, bringing teachers into the hospitals, is one of the milestones of British education, and while this move has been criticised as involving a lot of expenditure for little productivity, the issue is not a fiscal but a humane one. I would, however, have liked more practical information on teaching children who are virtually decorticate.

As a whole the book is useful and

constructive. It draws attention once again to the importance of respecting the human dignity of the handicapped child and helping him to achieve his fullest potential.

RONALD C. MACGILLIVRAY

**Convulsiones en la Infancia** By Natalio Fejerman and Carlos S. Medina. (Pp. 387; illustrated; price not stated.) Editorial Ergon: Buenos Aires. 1977.

This is a welcome addition to the study of infantile convulsions written in Spanish by two paediatric neurologists in Buenos Aires. The volume is divided into 17 chapters and many more sub-chapters, and is based on a fairly long clinical experience (14 and 10 years respectively). The prefaces of both Professor Carlos Gianantonio and Professor Bernabe Cantlon are full of praise.

The first chapter on epidemiology of convulsive phenomena is a limited review of the literature covering six pages with only 11 references, the most recent being of early 1975. A brief description of the physiological basis of electroencephalography and some of its normal and pathological features forms the second chapter with 29 references up to 1974. More space is devoted to the neurological examination and to the ophthalmoscopic and neuroradiological investigations including computerised tomography. The classification of the epilepsies is largely based on the views of Professors Gastaut and Merlis, both adult-orientated in 1970. Terminology becomes more complex in the discussion of petit mal, and in a Table on page 91 the authors suggest five different types (pure petit mal; petit mal with additional motor phenomena; petit mal with automatism; petit mal complicated by other forms of epilepsy; petit mal complicated by focal lesions). A number of interesting statements are quoted from a limited literature as to the evolution and prognosis of petit mal.

Other chapters are devoted to myoclonic phenomena, to severe forms of epilepsy in infancy (syndrome of West and syndrome of Lennox), and to so-called febrile convulsions, (eight pages). The authors state that between 1 and 5% of all children below the age of 5 years will have at some stage at least one febrile convulsion. They are hesitant as to whether febrile convulsions should be considered as a particular form of epilepsy in infancy or not.

The authors support the views of Margaret Lennox-Buchthal and Ounsted but recommend to limit the term of febrile convulsions to "habitually generalised convulsions associated with an acute common infection in infancy, lasting a few minutes and seen more frequently between 9 and 24 months of age." Probably the febrile part is understood within the term common infection.

In addition to focal, partial, and "hemi-generalised" convulsions, a long chapter is devoted to "temporal epilepsy" (20 pages) while only seven pages are given to status epilepticus.

A chapter on convulsions of the newborn has been prepared by C. T. Lombroso and N. Alvarez from Boston (19 pages) while an interesting chapter covers non-epileptic paroxysmal attacks which include narcolepsy, migraines, breath holding attacks, and paroxysmal vertigo. Drug therapy of the epilepsies and a brief note on prevention and prognosis complete the text while the second portion of the book forms an Atlas of Electroencephalography in Childhood. The illustrations of 8-channel EEGs are very clear and well selected.

This book in Spanish integrates the clinical and EEG features of children with convulsions and tries to review the literature without quarrelling with anybody's views. The bibliography is seriously limited to what was available in the libraries of Buenos Aires up to early 1975. The EEG atlas portion will be very useful to beginners, and it might become even more valuable if a section on the normal EEG in childhood was included for comparison with the pathological aspects.

G. PAMPIGLIONE

## Notice

**The Fifth International Meeting of Pediatric Neurology and Neurosurgery** will be held at the Hospital del Niño DIF, Mexico from 24-27 January 1979. Information may be obtained from: Hospital del Niño DIF Congress Office, Insurgentes Sur 3700, Mexico 22 D.F. Tel: (905) 573-53-48.