Book reviews

Annual Review of Neuroscience Volume 1 Edited by W. M. Cowan, Z. W. Hall, and E. R. Kandel. (Pp. 506; illustrated; price not stated.) Annual Reviews: Palo Alto, California. 1978.

Neuroscience has rapidly become the most exciting growth area in science, though this may not be apparent from the establishments of British universities and hospitals where the traditional departmental groupings are slower to break down than in the USA. Paradoxically, the proliferation of new specialist journals increases the problem of cross-fertilisation from related disciplines. For these reasons this new series of Annual Reviews is welcome. The Editorial Committee regards neuroscience as including all aspects of neural structure and function, from its genetic determination to the highest expression of its activity in human behaviour. The 16 chapters in the first volume concentrate rather heavily on invertebrate studies. Most of them are excellent and the main criticism might be that it is sometimes difficult to extract the general principles applicable to one's own fields of interest. A review of reviews is of little help, but special attention is drawn to the new methods in neuroanatomy, and especially of marking active neurones, and to the optical methods for monitoring neuronal activity which offer ways out of the difficulty of studying neuronal systems simultaneously at the cellular level. There is no doubt that this series will provide a very valuable guide to what is going on in related areas of study, and it will be essential in the library of all neurobiological departments.

J. A. SIMPSON

Neurology Third edition By Edwin R. Bickerstaff. (Pp. 204; illustrated; £4.95 hardback, £2.45 paperback.) Hodder and Stoughton: London. 1978. This book was originally written and published for nurses, and the intention was to describe briefly the nature of neurological diseases in order to give nurses more insight and background to the neurological and neurosurgical cases that they were looking after. Since it was first published in 1965 it has been

reprinted several times, and is now brought out as a third edition. During this time it has become more than a book for nurses. It is used widely by physiotherapists, radiographers, neurophysiological and laboratory technicians, and medical students. It is an outstanding book of its type. I am not sure how long a textbook has to be in circulation before it is accepted as a "classic" but there is no doubt that if this book is not already a classic, it will be soon. It is excellent value and is well produced with simple and relevant figures. It is highly recommended.

L. S. ILLIS

Neuro-ophthalmology: Clinical Signs and Symptoms By Thomas J. Walsh. (Pp. 285; illustrated; £15.75.) Lee and Febiger: Philadelphia, Henry Kimpton: London. 1978.

The author of this book rejects the customary systematic approach to the study of neuro-ophthalmology and prefers to consider the subject on the basis of clinical symptoms and signs. Each chapter deals with a specific symptom or sign in the form of a monograph. This approach is of some value to the clinician faced with the practical decisions of a differential diagnosis, and in this respect the book is a success, with such subjects as headache, diplopia, ptosis, nystagmus and so on. The text does not, however, present a comprehensive review of the subject, the chapter on gaze is remarkably short, and at times pays insufficient attention to important aspects—for example, quantitative perimetry in the consideration of field defects. Occasionally the author expresses a very personal view, such as his opinion that only a moderate percentage of orbital tumours are revealed in radiological studies and that palpation is more positive. On the other hand, there is an extremely useful and well-illustrated review of radiology in neuro-ophthalmology by another contributor. The presentation is very readable, and this book makes a useful practical contribution to the speciality without embracing its entirety.

R. M. MCFADZEAN

Chronic Progressive External Ophthalmoplegia By L. A. K. Bastiaansen. (Pp. 385; illustrated; price not stated.) Stafleu's Scientific Publishing Company: Leyden. 1978.

Chronic progressive external ophthalmoplegia (CPEO) is a rare condition. Classification can be traced from nuclear ophthalmoplegia, through ocular myopathy (Kiloh and Nevin), to "ophthalmoplegia plus" (Drachman). It is argued here that "ophthalmoplegia plus" is an entity on a basis of mitochondrial abnormality in cells of many organs despite its clinical diversity. Oculopharyngeal dystrophy emerges as a pure myopathy. The important association of CPEO with disorders of cardiac conduction is considered in detail, and the frequent link with pigmentary retinopathy (Kearns) is confirmed.

The book is presented in thesis form. It includes an introductory chapter on eye muscle, a review of the history of the disorder, illustrated accounts of the various syndromes, and detailed tabulations of reported cases. There is an index. Various papers published by the author and his collaborators are reprinted as an appendix. The production is of high quality and the translation reads well. It can be recommended as a comprehensive review of work in this area and as a guide to the literature.

BRYAN ASHWORTH

Fundamentals of Electroencephalography Second Edition By Kenneth A. Kooi, Richard P. Tucker, and Robert E. Marshall. (Pp. 249; illustrated; \$20.00.) Harper and Row: Hagerstown. 1978.

The second edition of this textbook is virtually identical in its format to the first edition of 1971. Co-authors of this edition now include R. P. Tucker and R. E. Marshall. The contents of the book have been updated where necessary to give a relatively superficial yet practical approach to the subject. References which appear at the back of each chapter are numerous. As the book is also intended for clinicians outwith the specialty, diagrams of the montages used would be more informative and readily understandable to those unfamiliar with the subject and its nomenclature.

ANNE P. MCGEORGE