

Book reviews

us all. In the first 50 pages he describes the life and works of this remarkable physician and gives the background to the Sedleian Professorship. The lectures themselves are contained within the next 100 pages, in which Dewhurst's original translations are amplified by copious footnotes. These lectures, which are a delight to read, formed the basis of many of Willis's subsequent books, which exerted such a profound impact on the development of neurological psychiatry. The volume is beautifully produced and will give endless pleasure. A must for all neurological libraries and an excellent present for the neurological tyro.

CD MARSDEN

Organic Psychiatry By William Alwyn Lishman (pp 967; £14.50) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1980.

This reprinted edition of Alwyn Lishman's encyclopaedic book, first published in 1978, will be welcomed by those unfortunate people who were unable to afford the high price of the first edition and can now purchase this paperback print at a more reasonable cost. That is not to say that the first edition was not worth every penny of the price, only that books such as this command such a large audience, and that high prices preclude many who would perhaps make the most use of them, for example students, from owning them. This soft-back version, with nearly 900 pages of well-reviewed literature on organic psychiatry, is a bargain that those interested will find hard to refuse.

Apart from the clearing up of some minor spelling mistakes, the printing is as the first edition, in which Professor Lishman examines psychiatric symptomatology associated with various organic disorders, especially those of the central nervous system. Part 1 is devoted to clinical assessment and differential diagnosis of psychopathology with special reference to the detection of organic brain syndromes, and discussion of clinical presentations arising either from generalised organic brain disease, or those which have regional affiliations based on localised pathology.

The second part is devoted to specific disorders covering, in addition to such neuropsychiatric topics as head injury, epilepsy and cerebrovascular accidents,

the psychopathology associated with endocrine diseases, metabolic disorders, vitamin deficiencies and toxic disorders. Of all these chapters, those on head injury, and dementia, stand out for their particularly well-reviewed and clear presentation of the available information in these fields. Available, that is, until the mid-1970s when, presumably the writing of the book was complete. The fact that in the late 70s and early 1980s some interesting new advancements in several of the fields discussed by Professor Lishman have occurred, and of course are not included in this book, in no way reflects on the quality of that produced, merely that the field of organic psychiatry is progressing rapidly. The role of neurotransmitters generally in the pathogenesis of psychiatric symptoms is poorly covered, monoamines for example not being mentioned in the index.

The really great virtue of this book is its readability. There are few texts of this size that can be read from cover to cover, but the easy style and lively presentation of data that Professor Lishman has produced make its digestion comfortable.

MICHAEL TRIMBLE

Childhood Neurological Problems: A Textbook for Health Care Professionals By Doris A Trauner (pp 150; £15.25) London: Year Book Med Pub, 1980.

Dr Trauner, an Assistant Professor of Neurology and Pediatrics, has subtitled her book "A Textbook for Health Care Professionals," with a broad spectrum of readers in mind among nurses, physiotherapists, "speech pathologists" and anyone who deals with children with problems involving the nervous system. I would agree with Dr Nyhan who, in a foreword, expresses the belief that it will also be useful to physicians in family practice and paediatrics. Some of the chapters could be read with benefit also by teachers, whose fears of epilepsy, cerebral palsy and other neurological problems stem largely from ignorance. To write a successful book for this readership is not easy with the risks of brevity and oversimplification producing a misleading picture of complex disorders, but this has been skilfully avoided with emphasis on principles and brief but generally adequate details of specific

disorders. The first two chapters, on "Normal Neurologic Development" and "The Neurologic Examination" set the scene and serve as an introduction to the following twelve chapters devoted to particular categories of disorder. I wish that the importance of accurate and regular measurement and recording of the head circumference had been stressed more strongly, since this is a vital statistic all too often neglected. The book is written basically for an American non-medical readership, but there are few changes needed for readers on this side of the Atlantic. Hyperactivity syndromes and learning disabilities, which occupy a higher proportion of the time of Paediatric Neurologists and Paediatricians in North America than in Britain, are dealt with in a pragmatic and helpful way. Belief in the need for a neurological opinion "to rule out neurological problems" in children with learning disorders is correctly regarded as a misleading concept widely held in educational circles. The value of routine electroencephalography in children with learning disabilities also receives—deservedly—short shrift.

I hope this book will be widely read by those at whom it is aimed and, if it is dipped into by some of their medical colleagues for whom the subject is *terra incognita*, so much the better.

FM BRETT

Persistent Pain, Vol II Edited by Sampson Lipton (pp 398; \$49.50) London: Academic Press Inc 1980.

This is the second volume to be issued under the above title, the first having been published in 1977. In both volumes chapters are contributed by experts in various fields. In Volume 1, the range offered covered many of the techniques which are used in treatment in Pain Clinics, and outlined the anatomy and physiology of pain. This was excellent, and still provides a valuable source for reference. In Volume II, some subjects such as acupuncture have been repeated, and others, such as dental, oral and facial pain, have been expanded. The appearance of a subject in Volume I does not, therefore, exclude it from Volume II. However, the process is not entirely one of updating and, unfortunately, some new chapters have not been written entirely from the

point of view of the treatment of persistent intractable pain.

The pattern in the new volume is unclear, and it seems that the subject matter strays beyond chronic intractable pain and techniques for its relief. Many of the investigations and treatments referred to are inappropriate outside specialist departments. The fact that pain can occur in a particular condition does not justify its inclusion unless it is relevant to pain relief when treatment of the primary condition has failed to give benefit. For instance, the treatment of gout and acute prolapse is not appropriate to a Pain Clinic, to name but two of many examples. Is it intended that future volumes should include the treatment of angina pectoris and renal colic? One of the reasons for some confusion is that the Pain Clinic in Liverpool is within the Department of Medical and Surgical Neurology, and there is, therefore, an easy interchange between clinics. However, this situation is unusual, and in most Pain Clinics, the physician in charge (often an anaesthetist) accepts a patient on the understanding that primary diagnosis and treatment of the underlying condition has been completed or pursued as far as possible. No series of volumes can expect to give a useful account of the management of all painful conditions. There are, however, some excellent chapters in Volume II, and these include Personality and Pain, Radiology of Back Pain, and the Role of Peptides. (One hopes that the diagram of the sensory distribution of the trigeminal nerve will not be quoted in any examination!) The book has much to commend it, but would have been more useful if it had been restricted to the general principles so well considered in the first volume.

PETER H SCHURR

Neuro-active Drugs in Endocrinology edited by EE Müller (pp 396; US\$59) Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1980.

The great complexity of amine and peptide pathways in the hypothalamus came as a big surprise when first discovered, and the study of these systems has prompted revision of many earlier views about neuronal function. In the last decade the boundary between hormones and neurotransmitters has been partly extinguished, the idea that one

CNS neurone synthesises one neurotransmitter questioned, and the concept that axonal synapses are the only means of interneuronal communications abolished. The introductory chapters of this symposium on neuro-endocrine disorder give an excellent critical introduction to these topics and describe recent brilliant experiments done to study the function and structure of hypothalamus and pituitary. Noteworthy chapters are by Palkovits on neurotransmitter distribution in the brain and by McCann on physiology. The remainder of the book, largely about neuropharmacology, pituitary hormones and diagnostic aids does not all achieve this high level, but the standard for a published conference proceedings remains consistently high. A total of 83 contributors from North America and Europe discuss the neuropharmacology of drugs acting on brain amine and peptide systems, the control of prolactin and growth hormone secretion, and the medical treatment of pituitary hormone over-production. This is now established as a viable alternative to surgical and radiation treatment. The standard of presentation and illustration is good apart from an occasional dose error, and the index is full. Despite being highly specialised, this is a useful and recommended book

DAVID PARKES

Benzodiazepines Today and Tomorrow Edited by R G Priest, U Vianna Filho, R Amrein, and M Skreta (pp 298; £14.95) Lancaster: MTP Press, 1980.

In September 1979, the First International Symposium on Benzodiazepines was held in Rio de Janeiro. However, this impressive title somewhat obfuscates the reality—Hoffman-La Roche supported a symposium attended by its own personnel, a few distinguished international speakers and many local Brazilian psychiatrists. Despite the absence of many international experts on the benzodiazepines, the meeting seems to have been useful if rather uncritical.

The chapters by Sternbach, Haefely and Kaplan on the history, biological basis and pharmacokinetics of the benzodiazepines are very good reviews. Otherwise many of the chapters are too narrowly oriented towards particular products to be useful. The drawbacks of

the benzodiazepines are hardly mentioned apart from a chapter by Bueno presenting preliminary data on dependence. Some chapters have large bibliographies, presumably provided by Hoffmann-La Roche. All in all, a book worth cadging but not buying.

M LADER

Cerebrospinal Fluid in Diseases of the Nervous System By Robert A Fishman (pp 384; \$18.25) WB Saunders and Co: Eastbourne, 1980.

This book fulfils a need for neurologists bringing together the recent advances in knowledge of fluid changes in neurological disease. It is nicely balanced with one half of the book devoted to anatomy, physiology and intracranial pressure and the other half dealing with the normal composition of the cerebrospinal fluid and to changes recorded in disease of the central nervous system.

The section devoted to physiology gives an excellent resumé of present knowledge of formation and absorption of CSF, including the evidence for active transport at choroid plexus level. The blood brain barrier in health and disease, together with the important pharmacological aspects of substances known to affect it are well done. The chapter on the performance of lumbar puncture and the complications thereof should be required reading for residents coming fresh to the investigation of patients with neurological disease. The description of changes of the cerebrospinal fluid in disease is exhaustive. Over 60 conditions are considered and, where appropriate, discussion of the abnormalities noted is invariably lively and helpful.

This will be a welcome addition to any neurological library.

EC HUTCHINSON

Addiction and Brain Damage Edited by Derek Richter (pp 305; £15.95) London: Croom Helm, 1980.

Alcohol and drug related problems are on the increase and in recent years interest has been focused on the mechanisms underlying dependence and tolerance. The advent of computed tomography has also made it possible to evaluate morphological changes in the brains of alcohol abusers. This timely volume contains the proceedings