

BOOK REVIEWS

An Introduction to Physical Methods of Treatment in Psychiatry

W. SARGANT and E. SLATER. Fourth edition. Pp. xv + 346. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1963. 30s.

The fourth edition of this well-known textbook retains all the good qualities of earlier editions. The various techniques are well described and their indications, limitations and dangers are clearly set out. Throughout the book great stress is laid on the need to take an adequate history, to assess the patient's personality and to make a careful diagnosis before instituting treatment. The chapter on convulsive treatment is particularly good and every postgraduate student of psychiatry will benefit by reading it. The changes that have taken place in psychiatric treatment since the last edition appeared are illustrated by the promotion, from Chapter V to Chapter I, of the section on chemical sedation and stimulation. This section deals thoroughly with only one or two drugs of each class, a much more preferable procedure than bewildering the reader with a long list of drugs and dosages.

The book has always been a personal one with an avowedly didactic approach. What the authors call 'greatly improved experimental methods of drug testing, of double-blind techniques and statistical sophistication generally' are dismissed on the second page of the preface and nowhere referred to again. The authors are really presenting an account of their own personal clinical experience with certain physical methods of treatment. There is a selective bibliography of 305 references, of which no less than 76 are publications dealing with leucotomy and allied procedures.

Although the book is not offered as a critical review, the authors might at least have mentioned the controversy over the efficacy of insulin in the treatment of schizophrenia. They do not deal with the non-specific therapeutic effects of drugs (and indeed of doctors) nor with the difficulties that such effects cause when we attempt to assess the results of treatment. If only two or three of the 41 pages devoted to leucotomy had dealt with these topics instead, the book would have been even more valuable than it is.

A Primer of Medicine

M. H. PAPPWORTH, M.D., M.R.C.P. 2nd edition. Pp. 292 with 18 figures. London: Butterworths. 1963. 32s. 6d.

As the author tells us in his preface, the first edition was an enormous success. This is attributable to the excellent and detailed description of how to elicit physical signs with careful consideration of their significance. The associated clear thinking and methodology should prove helpful to the teacher as well as the student. The section on neurology is particularly good. History-taking does not lend itself so well to such treatment, but omission of any mention of the fundamental question in clinical medicine, 'Why has this patient come to see me now?' is surprising.

At the end of the basic chapters a number of selected topics, several of them new to this edition, are inserted. These seemed not germane to the main theme of the book and their quality is such as to detract from what has preceded them. Statements such as 'the blood urea rarely rises above 100 mg.% in extra-renal uræmia' are manifestly untrue. The last two chapters are

irritating appendages. That on 'Swellings' could well have been incorporated in the introduction as an example of diagnostic staging, and the chapter on the 'Diagnosis of Obscure Pyrexia' is poor in factual content, emphasis, and layout. Why, for example, no mention of *Staph. pyogenes* in the section on blood culture? In one paragraph jaundice and orchitis are mentioned twice as rare features of brucellosis. The text is a jumble of signs, tests, and accounts of diseases. This book therefore is like the curate's egg and would benefit from excision of the poorer parts.

Symposium on the Pathogenesis of Essential Hypertension (Prague, May 22-29, 1960)

Editors: J. H. CORT, V. FENCL, Z. HEJL, J. JIRKA
London, Oxford, New York and Paris: Pergamon Press. 1962. £5.

In judging the value of published symposia one can profitably ask three questions: Who was there? What did they say? What is the delay in publication?

The participants could scarcely have been better chosen. There were leaders of cardiovascular research from the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia as well as distinguished representatives of Europe and the U.S.A. They furnished a reasonably comprehensive review of current work, in which there are no notable omissions. Some might consider the higher nervous system to have been given too much space and the kidney and the sodium ion too little, but perhaps this redresses an already too adverse balance. It was clear that the Eastern members of the conference started with the premise that the cause of essential hypertension was persistent conditioned reflex, and were interested mainly in the detail of mechanisms. Since the Western members did not accept the premise, there was some lively controversy, and the discussions following each presentation constitute most of the special value of this symposium.

The delay in publication of this edition has unfortunately been considerable. Though dated 1962, the publication date in the U.K. is given as January 1963. Most interested workers will already have read the same material already published in 1961 by the State Publishing House, Prague. Thus the matter, especially in this rapidly advancing subject, is now somewhat stale. However, the symposium would still be useful to workers beginning in the field.

Anatomy, Regional and Applied

R. J. LAST, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S. Third Edition
Pp. xvi + 840, with 406 illustrations. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1963. 120s.

In 1954 the first edition of 'Anatomy, Regional and Applied' appeared; it was immediately apparent that here at last was a textbook of anatomy designed for the primary Fellowship examinations. The continuing popularity of this book is evidenced by the publication now of a third edition. This has been enlarged by 100 pages due to the inclusion of full sections on descriptive osteology, an inclusion which will be welcomed by examination candidates, who up to now have felt this gap in an otherwise complete text.

The book is beautifully produced and illustrated; the text demonstrates Professor Last's complete mastery of anatomical teaching. It is now, more than ever, essential reading for the postgraduate surgical student.