

Books received

- Ganglion-blocking and Ganglion-stimulating Agents.* By D. A. KHARKEVICH. Pp. xi+367, illustrated. Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1967. 90s.
- Essentials of Otolaryngology.* By R. S. LEWIS, S. R. MAWSON, W. G. EDWARDS and H. LUDMAN. Pp. vii+380, illustrated. London: William Heinemann Medical Books. 1967. 55s.
- A View of the Brain.* By J. S. GRIFFITH. Oxford Science Research Papers No. 1. Pp. 79, illustrated. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1967. 15s.
- Clinical Virology.* By R. H. A. SWAIN and T. C. DODDS. Pp. xii+318, illustrated. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1967. 75s.
- Ovarian Physiology.* By G. S. RICHARDSON. Pp. 167. New England Journal of Medicine Medical Progress Series.

- London: J. & A. Churchill. 1967. 50s.
- Communication in Science. Documentation and Automation.* Edited by A. DE REUCK and JULIE KNIGHT. Pp. xi+274. London: J. & A. Churchill. 1967. 60s.
- The Pharmaceutical Industry—a Personal Study.* By WYNDHAM DAVIES. Pp. 240. Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1967. 63s.

New Editions

- Bedside Medicine.* By I. SNAPPER and A. I. KAHN. Second edition. Pp. xxvii+824. London: William Heinemann Medical Books. 1967. 140s.
- The Diabetic ABC. A Practical Book for Patients and Nurses.* By R. D. LAWRENCE. Fourteenth edition. Pp. 91. London: H. K. Lewis. 1967. 7s.

Book reviews

Children of Very Low Birth Weight

By ALISON McDONALD. Pp. 126. M.E.I.U. Research Monograph No. 1. London: William Heinemann Medical Books. 1967. 25s.

This is the first of a series of Research Monographs to be published by the Medical Education and Information Unit of the Spastics Society. It resembles in layout and presentation the 'Little Club Clinics' that emanate from the same stable. The purpose of the series is to provide specialist research workers with material that might otherwise have remained buried in a university thesis, and it is anticipated that not even all paediatricians will be attracted to this publication. With these provisos the readership will be élite indeed.

The substance of the book concerns a survey of some 1100 children who had weighed 4 lb (1800 g) or less at birth. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the physical and mental handicaps discovered when these children were between 6 and 8 years of age and to correlate them with the perinatal history. These children were contacted utilizing M.R.C. records assembled between 1951 and 1953 for another purpose and much effort must have been expended in tracing them so completely. The author indicates that it would have been necessary to screen 230,000 live births in order to assemble a comparable group. Children with abnormalities apparent to a Health Visitor were later examined in detail by psychologists and by one of a variety of doctors ranging from school medical officers to 'specialists.'

The findings, not unexpectedly, supported the contention of Little, 105 years ago, that cerebral palsy is associated with prematurity. A relationship between low birth weight and handicaps such as blindness and mental deficiency was also demonstrated. Perhaps the main virtues of the work are that it refers to British material and that, for the first time, numerical data derived from a large survey has been made available.

Two major defects exist, however, that cannot be overcome in spite of much statistical manipulation and computer assisted analysis. The first is the enormous number of observers that took part in so many centres which in itself brings problems in the interpretation of the data processed by them. More serious is the delay in publication which is 8 years after the observations were made and 16 years after the children were born. Thus such obsolete terminology as 'blue' and 'white' asphyxia is applied in the perinatal observations, surely inexcusable in 1967.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that a series of papers in a suitable journal would have served the author and the intended readers better than this type of publication.

The Uptake and Storage of Noradrenaline in Sympathetic Nerves

By L. I. IVERSEN. Pp. xiv+253, illustrated. London: Cambridge University Press. 1967. 57s. 6d.

This is an excellent monograph on recent advances in knowledge concerning catecholamine neurotransmitters. As indicated by the title, there is emphasis on the uptake mechanisms, particularly those aspects revealed by studies with tritiated noradrenaline. As this appears to be a unique method of inactivation for catecholamines, it is appropriate to deal with it in detail, especially as the author has himself done much work in this field.

There are a number of elegant hitherto unpublished photomicrographs including an electron microscopic autoradiograph. Evidence for and against the cholinergic link hypothesis is succinctly summarized. In addition to reviewing the peripheral role of noradrenaline, there is a good brief survey of evidence concerning catecholamine neurotransmitters in the central nervous system. A comprehensive bibliography is appended to each chapter.

Paediatric and Adolescent Gynecology

By H. W. JONES and R. H. HELLER. Pp. 333, illustrated. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1966. 72s.

Professor Jones, a gynaecologist, and Dr Heller, a paediatrician, have written an account of this subject which will serve as a reference for many years. The first two parts are a description of the embryological development of the reproductive tract, and the anatomical and physiological considerations in infancy and childhood. This section accounts for about one-sixth of the book and provides a foundation for the pathology. The remainder of the book is in four sections; anomalies, tumours, infections, and endocrine disorders.

The diseases described are not commonly met by any single gynaecologist. The authors have described each syndrome with lucidity; apart from the clinical picture, details of diagnostic procedures and treatment are given. The accounts are supported by their own cases and those culled from the literature. Their own cases are displayed in excellent photographs. It is these features which make the book a worthwhile reference.

The senior author is an expert on endocrine disorders and this section is of particular interest. He makes a plea for early recognition of sex in infancy so that the child may be reared in the same sex as it will bear in adult life. Paediatrician, obstetrician, and midwife have the responsibility of assigning the sex of a newborn child; all will have something to learn from Professor Jones' wide experience.