

Reviews

FOUNDATIONS OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

System of Ophthalmology. Edited by Sir Stewart Duke-Elder. Volume VII: *The Foundations of Ophthalmology.* (Pp. 829+xxii; illustrated. £7.) London: Henry Kimpton. 1962.

In this, Volume VII, the third volume of the *System of Ophthalmology* to appear, Sir Stewart Duke-Elder deals with such basic aspects of ophthalmology as heredity, pathology, diagnosis, and therapeutics. The section on pathology contains the matter that appeared in the second volume of the author's *Textbook of Ophthalmology*, revised and brought up to date by Professor Norman Ashton. This now takes up 114 pages as against 77 previously. The section on clinical methods of examination, which occupied 108 pages in the *Textbook*, has now been expanded to 259 pages; in this revision Sir Stewart had the help of Mr. Redmond Smith. The largest expansion of previous material is the section on heredity; this, which was dealt with very briefly in Volume I of the *Textbook of Ophthalmology*, now covers 113 pages devoted almost exclusively to general principles. The entirely new material in this volume consists of Section IV, devoted to ocular therapeutics, covering 339 pages—almost half of the book. This important section is particularly comprehensive. There is a useful introductory chapter on the history of ocular therapeutics, while the different pharmacological agents are considered in three large chapters devoted to surface effectors, systemic effectors, and anti-infective agents (including the antibiotics). Two further large chapters deal with immunological therapy and biological agents. Both summarize comprehensively a very large literature. The concluding chapter is devoted to the various forms of physical therapy and contains a useful survey of radiotherapy in relation to ophthalmology contributed by Dr. M. Lederman.

Though the third to appear, this book is actually Volume VII of the *System*, and Sir Stewart points out that it is being published out of sequence as the greatest need for re-writing his original *Textbook* lay with the clinical sections and he felt it necessary to clear the ground for the new clinical survey by an exposition of the basic principles.

ARNOLD SORSBY.

HOSPITALS AND CHILDREN

Hospitals and Children: A Parent's-eye View. By James Robertson. Foreword by Sir Harry Platt, Bt., LL.D., M.D., M.S., F.R.C.S. (Pp. 159. 18s.) London: Victor Gollancz. 1962.

This book would be important even if its lessons were limited solely to the subject which is its main concern—the general care of children in hospitals. But its theme may be extended without strain to the whole army of sick and injured people who need hospital attention. Are they to receive the full individual care to which they are surely entitled, or are they to be “cases,” impersonal units of human flesh harbouring “diseases” that need diagnosis and treatment? When Sir Thomas Browne wrote in 1643, “Let me be sick myself if sometimes the malady of my patient be not a disease unto me,” he had in mind the hallmark of the humane doctor (or nurse)—namely, the ability to imagine oneself in the patient's place, to appreciate his symptoms and to know

his personal feelings without being told, to understand his anxieties, to foresee his needs both bodily and mental, and to have the urge to do everything reasonably possible to meet them. Not an easy thing for any man or woman to do even when dealing with adults, but infinitely harder when the patient is an infant requiring admission to hospital for investigation or treatment that cannot be carried out at home. But if we cannot expect babies to help us with their comments, all the more reason why we should listen to what their parents have to say. This is exactly what Mr. James Robertson has enabled us to do in his new book, which incorporates more than 100 of the many letters he received from parents after he had contributed a series of articles to the *Observer* and sponsored a B.B.C. television programme.

They are remarkable letters, eminently unselfish and reasonable, going out of their way to be fair to doctors and nurses, full of praise for the care their children received in some hospital wards, but clearly indicating how much inhumanity may still be found in others.

Mr. Robertson has classified the parents' observations by sorting the letters into groups dealing with various aspects of the problem—for instance, admission of mothers with their babies; visiting hours; the attitudes of staff; patients requiring operation; practice in isolation hospitals; the giving of information to parents, and so forth; and he makes his own comments and suggestions, which should do much to stimulate reforms long overdue.

This is an excellent book, well written, well produced, and provided with a useful bibliography. It should be studied carefully by all who are concerned with the care of children in hospitals, especially the medical and nursing staffs; and also by those who are responsible for the planning and designing of new hospitals.

Sir Harry Platt, who was chairman of the committee appointed by the Central Health Services Council to report on the Welfare of Children in Hospital (1959), has written a foreword which adds his great authority to the author's own observations and conclusions.

N. B. CAPON.

NEUROLOGY AND NEUROPSYCHIATRY

Recent Advances in Neurology and Neuropsychiatry. Edited by Lord Brain, D.M., F.R.C.P. Seventh edition. (Pp. 282 +ix; illustrated. 40s.) London: J. and A. Churchill. 1962.

The appearance of a new edition of this book always excites pleasurable anticipation among physicians and surgeons interested in the nervous system, and though the 1962 version is deprived of the contribution of the late Dr. E. B. Strauss it maintains in every way the very high standard set by its predecessors. The selection of topics for discussion is hard to fault, and their presentation is balanced and critical.

Initial chapters on “Consciousness and Unconsciousness” and on “The Cerebral Basis of Mind” reflect the special interests of the editor, as does Dr. Marcia Wilkinson's excellent account of cervical spondylosis. Among miscellaneous topics treated briefly but authoritatively the corpus striatum, muscle disorders, and neurological complications of cancer are noteworthy. Mr. Douglas Northfield contributes a characteristically practical review of intracranial tumour, and Dr. David Sutton a succinct and well-illustrated account of modern neuroradiology. Finally the work includes a critical review of electroencephalography by Professor Denis Hill and Dr. M. V. Driver which runs to nearly 70