

## Reviews

### CLINICAL NEUROLOGY

*Clinical Neurology.* By 65 authors. Edited by A. B. Baker, M.D. In three volumes. (Vol. I—pp. 1-738; Vol. II—pp. 739-1404; Vol. III—pp. 1405-1960+index. £21.) London, Toronto, Melbourne, Sydney, and Wellington: Cassell and Co. Ltd. 1955.

This unusually ambitious work, the price of which puts it beyond the reach of most practitioners, is in effect a series of essays by a large group of experts in their chosen fields. Its structure is rather different from that of most large textbooks, for although it was designed to be encyclopaedic the arrangement is only partly systematic. The three volumes with their 43 chapters are held together by an excellent and most essential index; this is an important point, for contents of chapters by different authors necessarily overlap, since each author has intended his contribution to be inclusive in his particular field. For instance, degeneration of the pathways in the spinal cord will be described by Dr. Buchanan in Chapter 19 on demyelinating diseases; in Chapter 25 by Dr. Finlayson and Chapter 26 by Dr. Craig, dealing respectively with syringomyelia and allied conditions and with spinal tumours; and in Chapter 30 by Dr. Schaller, who describes myelitis. While there is no mention of the management of acute respiratory embarrassment in Dr. Schaller's section on acute anterior poliomyelitis in Chapter 30, it is mentioned by the editor, Dr. Baker, in his chapter (12) on viral encephalitis.

From these two examples it is clear that the volumes are not suitable for continuous systematic reading, but comprise rather a collection of monographs, some of which are authoritative and inclusive, and some unfortunately a more superficial treatment of the subject chosen. The team of 65 contributors includes specialists in most of the branches of medicine in which neurological disorder may be found. The whole field of neurology has been covered, and there are some unusual contributions, such as that on genetic aspects of neurology by Dr. Refsum, who has since succeeded Dr. Monrad Krohn in Oslo; that by Dr. Aring on psychological aspects of neurology; or those on the encephalitides by the editor. Though Dr. Baker has achieved a great task in collating the contributions, still the feeling is left of a collection of essays rather than of a systematic text.

The essays in all these volumes are supported by lengthy bibliographies, and most offer a critical survey of their own aspect of neurology which can be used for access to the literature. The chapter on electroencephalography by Dr. Jasper and Dr. Daly, for example, is an excellent short review, and that by Dr. DeJong on case-taking is a textbook in itself. No one will want to read every part in detail, and unfortunately few interested in one field will want the whole encyclopaedia. The volumes are a library in miniature, and can be so used by those who can afford a library. Otherwise it is difficult to know to whom to recommend the work, although the editor includes us all in the statement that, "though primarily designed for the clinician, it is hoped that it will also serve the student and the investigator." Some may think that design too ambitious.

The volumes are beautifully printed, illustrated, and presented.

DENIS WILLIAMS.

### BIOCHEMISTRY

*Textbook of Biochemistry.* By Edward Staunton West, Ph.D., and Wilbert R. Todd, Ph.D. 2nd edition. (Pp. 1356+xii. 63s. or 59s.) New York, London: The Macmillan Company. 1955.

This is a modern textbook of biochemistry with an excellent blend of dynamic and structural aspects of the subject. It contains more information than is needed by the average medical student in this country, but the good undergraduate will find much to enjoy in reading it. The book is well written and well illustrated and appears to be remarkably free from errors for a book of its size. On page 175

"cholamine" should read "colamine." "Epicholestane" is written instead of "epicholesterol" on page 184. On page 187 the description of the cholestane ring contains one "trans" too many, while that for coprostane should be "cis, trans, trans," and not "cis, cis, trans, trans." The existence of ester linkages in proteins is less certain than one might deduce from page 331; the molecular weight of insulin is 6,000, not 40,900 (p. 335), though polymerization to 48,000 can easily occur. On page 47 the pH of a solution of acetic acid could be much more easily and illuminatingly calculated if the equation  $[H^+] = \sqrt{K_a[HA]}$  were converted, by taking logarithms, into the form  $pH = \frac{1}{2}pK_a + \frac{1}{2}\log \frac{1}{[HA]}$ . The opportunity of emphasizing the significance of the logarithmic function in biology in general, and with respect to H<sup>+</sup> concentration in particular, should be embraced rather than evaded.

But all these blemishes are minor ones, and the book can be safely recommended to those who wish to take notice of the rapid development which biochemistry continues to make, and will undoubtedly make in the future.

F. G. YOUNG.

### SURGICAL ANATOMY OF THE LIVER

*Introduction to Hepatic Surgery.* By Henry Gans, M.D. Introduction by A. Brunschwig, M.D. (Pp. 265+xvi; illustrated. 70s.) Amsterdam, Houston, London, New York: Elsevier Publishing Company. 1955.

In recent years the internal vascular pattern of solid organs has been studied with a view to the performance of conservative resections and the sparing of healthy tissue. Sir Russell Brock has conducted such studies on the lung and, more recently, F. T. Graves on the kidney.

The book under review tackles this problem in the liver. The work has been carried out by the study of plastic casts of the vascular trees of this organ, an investigation complicated by the presence of both afferent and efferent venous systems. The author shows quite clearly that the liver should be regarded surgically as a three-lobed organ when considered from the standpoint of the anatomy of the structures of the portal tracts, while the systems of hepatic veins tend to occupy the corresponding interlobar fissures. Except for the middle lobe, further subdivision is not practical; but it is pointed out that the rational procedure in operations for partial removal of the liver has to follow the interlobar fissures, and that if this is done mainly by blunt dissection the hepatic veins can be picked up and ligated. This study of the vascular anatomy of the liver occupies the first half of the book and is a report of an excellent piece of research. The second half describes indications for, and the technique of, partial hepatectomy; most of the information is based on reports in the literature and gives the impression of little actual surgical experience.

To surgeons who operate on the liver this book will prove a valuable guide to the anatomy, and the author makes out a strong case for the abandonment of operations that do not take into account the vascular arrangement of the portal tracts. The book is well printed and illustrated, but the nomenclature adopted is somewhat confusing and may require revision in the light of further study.

R. MILNES WALKER.

### A SURGICAL TEXTBOOK

*Textbook of Surgery.* Edited by H. F. Moseley, M.A., D.M., M.Ch., F.A.C.S., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.S.(C.). Foreword by G. Gavin Miller, M.D., C.M., M.Sc., F.R.C.S.(C.), F.A.C.S. Second edition. (Pp. 1,136+xxii; illustrated. £6.) London: Henry Kimpton. 1955.

This is the first Canadian textbook of surgery to be published, and most of the contributors are associated with McGill University. The first edition appeared in 1952, and the fact that a second edition has already been called for is sufficient evidence of its success. Two excellent chapters, on radioactive isotopes and on acute abdominal conditions, have been added.

I have spent many hours browsing through the volume and have been astounded at the amount of information