

A bibliography of 95 items makes differing views readily accessible.

Perhaps its greatest value will be for students who only too often are turgid with facts but innocent of method. Here at least is a corrective. Important concepts such as the principles of taxonomic relevance, of mosaic evolution, of the common inheritance or the independent acquisition of characters are succinctly explained. Especially valuable for the young research worker is the attempt to assess why some of the early accounts of the South African ape-men went wrong or, if right, met with unexpected rejection. Sir Wilfrid frankly describes his own original error of judgement and refusal to accept them as hominids, and he traces much of the resistance met by Dart's early account of the Taung skull to subtle nuances in its style of presentation. The failure of Broom's important monograph to carry conviction was partly due to an impression of haste in its preparation, to an appearance of crudity in his free-hand illustrations (which in fact were extremely accurate), and to the inclusion of a weak section by a younger anatomist. These are interesting reasons for rejecting a work of remarkable soundness and perception. They teach a lesson from which many of us may profit.

The author's opinions on the fossil evidence for human evolution are already sufficiently well known to make it unlikely that he will spring any major surprises in this latest book; nor does he. Taxonomically he is a lumpner rather than a splitter, and, by broad common sense, a very persuasive one. He rejects *Homo habilis*, relegating it to *Australopithecus* along with *Zinjanthropus*, *Telanthropus*, *Paranthropus* et al. This is orthodox enough, but he is also near to taking the next step—the fusion of *A. africanus* and *A. robustus* into one species—though he never quite does so.

In an interesting chapter "How did the Australopithecines live?" Sir Wilfrid carefully estimates the likely range of their functional capacities and possible behaviour, but he is cautious about accepting evidence of fractured baboon skulls as indicative of their ability to organize hunts.

In short, this is a book for many shelves.

CALVIN WELLS.

## Symposium on Burns

**Research in Burns.** Congress, Edinburgh, 1965. Edited by A. B. Wallace, C.B.E., M.Sc., F.R.C.S.Ed., and A. W. Wilkinson, Ch.M., F.R.C.S.Ed., F.R.C.S. (Pp. 644 + xii; illustrated 90s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1966.

This book contains some 70 papers presented at the Second International Congress on Research in Burns, held in Edinburgh in September 1965. Those who attend such congresses will not be surprised that the papers are of very varying length, elegance, and value.

There are some valuable papers on resuscitation and on several aspects of the metabolic disturbances that follow burning. Two sessions were devoted to the epidemiology of burns and to statistical assessment of the results of treatment. There is an interesting account of the development of "levitation" into a practicable method for the nursing of burned patients. Though

papers on cognate subjects are generally grouped together, few of the themes are held for long. There are, however, reports of two symposia—one on infection in burns, and one on the design of burn units—in which the individual papers are amplified by an extensive verbatim account of the discussion.

The publication of volumes of short papers given at international congresses has two uses: to remind participants of interesting items that they heard, and to inform others of the developing fringe of the art. The first purpose is hardly served by a volume appearing a year after the meeting. The present volume certainly gives a valuable conspectus of the ways in which the management of burns is being studied and improved; but the general reader will find it somewhat indigestible, and the expert will doubtless have read most of the papers in the journals before or since the meeting. The usefulness of the book for either reader would be hindered by the lack of an index.

Connoisseurs of symposium volumes search in the verbatim discussions for gems like "Chairman: 'I did not quite catch that, Dr. X,'" or "Now it is time for tea." In this volume verbatim is happily confined to the two symposia and to the opening and closing meetings, though this has not prevented the inclusion of a good many remarks that may have been appropriate at the time but are irrelevant now.

The closing session was a public meeting on "Prevention of Burning Accidents," in which a telling case is made for a greater degree of public awareness of this problem, not only in Britain but in all countries, and for the establishment of more specialized units for the treatment of burns.

R. E. O. WILLIAMS.

## Metabolic Disorders

**Advances in Metabolic Disorders.** Vol. 2. Edited by Rachmiel Levine and Rolf Luft. (Pp. 279+x. \$11.00.) New York and London: Academic Press, 1965.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the informed review compiled by a suitably critical expert serves an especially important place in medical progress these days, because it can provide essential guidance in a medical literature which becomes ever more voluminous. It can counteract, moreover, the increasing tendency to believe that the more often a thing is said the more likely it is to be true.

The first volume of this series appeared in 1964, and was reviewed in the *B.M.J.* (*Brit. med. J.*, 1964, 2, 558). The second volume, like its predecessor, also consists of a series of reviews by acknowledged leaders in their respective fields. The first of the five is a thorough survey of modern knowledge on gout by J. B. Wyngaarden, who has long worked in this field, and who contributes 16 papers to a bibliography of nearly 400 on the subject. It covers all aspects and reveals well how little and how much is known about the disorder. It is suggested that the acute attack may be initiated by a local accumulation of lactic acid, leading, by its pH change, to a deposit of needle-like crystals of monosodium urate monohydrate. This results in leucocytic reactions and in the rapid rise in

concentration of certain kinin peptides which cause vasodilatation, pain, and tenderness. Although isotopic studies are doing much to clarify many dynamic aspects of the metabolic disorder, it is evident that the essential nature of the disease is still not really understood.

The second review is of the value of the anabolic (nitrogen-retaining) steroids in therapy. The difficulties of reaching a final evaluation are made very clear, and it is pointed out that the effect on nitrogen retention is likely to be heavily influenced by the previous exposure of the patient to endogenous androgens. Although no dogmatic conclusions are drawn, it is clear that the value of anabolic steroids in steroid-induced osteoporosis is unproved. The long-term results in primary osteoporosis are scarcely more convincing.

The third section is a review of modern concepts of macroglobulinaemia by Jan Waldenström himself. This disorder is likely to be a proliferation of one cell clone like myeloma. Its varied clinical picture and prognosis and our developing knowledge on the changes resulting in the immunoglobulins are well surveyed.

A chapter on the tryptophane-nyacin metabolic pathway in man contains a great deal of technical information and methodology. It is primarily directed to advising research workers in this field, rather than to discussing clinical significance. Several hereditary forms of disorder of tryptophane metabolism are known, and abnormalities have been reported in many common clinical conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and some forms of carcinoma.

The fifth and final section deals with the syndrome of testicular feminization. The clinical presentation and course of this rare disorder are well described, and extensive studies of the behaviour of testosterone by the author leads to the conclusion that normal male amounts of this androgen are formed, but that they are for some unknown reason biologically inactive.

These reviews should all prove extremely valuable for reference by research workers in their respective fields; they tend to be a little too detailed for the average clinician.

C. L. COPE.

## Infantile Cerebral Palsy

**Das Spastisch Gelähmte Kind.** By Professor F. W. Rathke and Dr. H. Knapfer. (Pp. 247; illustrated. DM. 39.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme, 1966.

This book is directed not only to doctors but also to parents, social workers, and workshop instructors for physically disabled. The authors present a very comprehensive and lucid exposition of diagnosis, classification, and remedial exercise treatment of infantile cerebral palsy. In order to facilitate better understanding the authors have avoided medical technical terms as much as possible and have replaced them with everyday expressions.

In the first chapter a short survey is given of the causes of cerebral palsy, followed by a detailed description of the development of the locomotor system, posture, and reflexes of the normal child. The next chapter is concerned with the classification of the various forms of cerebral palsy: spastic, athetotic, ataxic,