

## Book Reviews

### Conditions Causing Headache

**Research and Clinical Studies in Headache.** Vol. 1. Edited by Arnold P. Friedman, M.D. (Pp. 221; illustrated. sFr./DM. 41.50.) Basle and New York: S. Karger, 1967.

Interest in the subject of headache has greatly increased in the last decade as research activities move rapidly into the sphere of chemical investigation rather than clinical description, but the literature is so scattered that the average physician finds difficulty in keeping up to date. This book is said to be the first of a series intended to bring together under one cover authoritative reviews on different facets of the problem, and edited by a distinguished physician well known for his own work in this field the series has certainly made a good start. The contributors are drawn from widely separated parts of the world—Europe, Australia, and America—and are recognized authorities on the subjects they discuss. Though any book drawn up in this manner is bound to have a lot of repetition in it, this has been reduced to an acceptable minimum.

The introduction by E. C. Kunkle forms a philosophical prelude, stressing the need to look at the "whole" patient, and often to temper one's therapeutic enthusiasm with sound common sense. It includes a number of classical quotations which will no doubt be a boon to speakers looking for an opening or closing sentence to their discourse on headache. There then follows an extensive review by F. Sicuteri on vasoneuractive substances and vascular pain. This is a valuable article, with 163 references, tracing the development of thought and work on this aspect, and goes well beyond the action of

methysergide, the drug with which its author's name has been so closely connected. The clinical use of methysergide is later dealt with by D. A. Curran, H. Hinterberger, and J. W. Lance, from Sydney, who review its development, trials, indications and limitations, and its dosage schedule. It is of course a drug not without dangers, and its most alarming side-effect—retroperitoneal fibrosis—has a chapter to itself written by J. A. Graham and his colleagues from Boston. They analyse 27 cases of this curious condition, which of course also occurs in patients without any such precipitating cause; they consider it in conjunction with other types of inflammatory fibrosis (for example, pleuro-pulmonary fibrosis) occurring during methysergide therapy and think the drug uncovers rather than causes a predisposition to collagenosis in susceptible individuals. They suggest further that more attention might be paid to a possible link between migraine and the collagen disorders.

A very useful clinical chapter on migraine variants is contributed by J. D. Carroll, but this is marred a little by some unfortunate phraseology and even some inaccuracies. The statement that in recurrent attacks of unilateral headache followed by a third nerve palsy, or sometimes a total unilateral ophthalmoplegia, arteriography has always failed to show any abnormality could be very misleading to many readers, and this is not helped by the later statements that the most

common sites for aneurysms causing the ophthalmoplegic variety of migraine are the main trunk of the internal carotid artery or its junction with the posterior communicating artery. Most neurologists and neurosurgeons will know what the writer means by these apparently contradictory statements, but there are many others who are going to read this book. This section also quotes another author as holding views on certain arteriographic appearances in "ophthalmoplegic migraine" which are exactly the opposite to those which he has published, and it is a pity that this has been allowed to creep into a textbook.

There is a chapter by R. Greene on menstrual headache, and a justifiably rather indefinite chapter by P. F. A. Hofer on the electroencephalogram in headache. The book ends with two chapters from the Mayo Clinic by M. J. Martin, H. P. Rome, and W. M. Swenson on that most common of all chronic headaches—the muscle tension headache—which is so often glossed over in a few sentences in textbooks. Here it is looked at symptomatically, aetiologically, and therapeutically. The optimism of two of the authors in the results of treatment will not be shared by many, and it is important not to confuse relief from the headache with relief from the patient's complaints about it. However their emphasis on looking at the patient as a whole brings us back to the introduction and so rounds off a most informative book, which will be a source of reference of great value to anyone trying to understand the wide spectrum of the conditions causing headache.

EDWIN R. BICKERSTAFF.

### Philosophical Approach to Learning

**An Introduction to Gynaecology and Obstetrics.** By Philip Rhodes, F.R.C.S. (Eng.), F.R.C.O.G. (Pp. 278+viii; illustrated. 21s.) London: Lloyd-Luke, 1967.

The plethora of small books on obstetrics and gynaecology which have been added to the collection of new editions of old-established small textbooks of the "crammer" type in recent years would seem to make it very difficult to justify the production of yet another. This is a textbook with a difference, as it approaches the subjects in a novel fashion and is obviously not intended as a book for quickly memorizing a few essential facts before an examination as are so many of the other small textbooks.

The author deals with the subject in an almost philosophical fashion, and has tried, with success, "to show something of the background ideas which inform the practice of gynaecology and obstetrics." He has also succeeded in bringing into perspective the relationships between obstetrics and gynaecology and the other disciplines of medicine.

This has been difficult to achieve in the compass of the small size of this book while still introducing all the essential factual elements of obstetrics and gynaecology. It is not intended to replace a full textbook, but a student reading this book would be able to grasp the wider concept which Professor Rhodes has been trying to convey. When a student comes to reading any of the present large textbooks, particularly if they are being used only for reference, after reading this small book he will be able to see any of the conditions found in obstetrics and gynaecology in its true context in relation to medicine. In any new venture there are bound to be some parts which are not universally acceptable; for example, it might have been preferable to deal with the treatment of each condition as it occurred rather than to leave the whole treatment in gynaecology to one chapter. This is a small criticism of a book which is otherwise very attractive, both from the point of view of what it is aiming to do and for the way in which the author expresses his undoubted literary ability.

This book can certainly be recommended to students in preference to all the other books on obstetrics and gynaecology which some students rely on without reading

one of the large textbooks, because this book, while small, does not attempt to provide more than a framework but does convey an impression of the width and scope of the subjects of obstetrics and gynaecology.

IAN MACGILLIVRAY.

### Human Extracellular Proteins

**Molecular Biology of Human Proteins.** Vol. 1. Nature and Metabolism of Extracellular Proteins. By H. E. Schultze and J. F. Heremans. (Pp. 904+xii; illustrated. £15.) Amsterdam, London, and New York: Elsevier, 1966.

On opening a book of this size one expects to find a collection of articles lacking coherency and of varying quality that have been contributed by a group of authors. It is a refreshing surprise to discover that this massive book has been compiled by two authors, that it possesses many of the desirable qualities which should be associated with single- or dual-authorship, and that it contains a critical, concise, and comprehensive account of interwoven topics.