Book Reviews

In view of the clinical importance of cerebral edema this thorough study that includes recent electron microscopic and chemical findings and the therapeutic use of osmotically active agents, corticosteroids and hypothermia will be welcomed by neurosurgeons. Some questions, however, are still controversial, e.g., whether edema may result from anoxia and hypercapnia, and the mechanism of the therapeutic effect of hypertonic urea solutions considering the relatively slow action after their infusion. An excellent bibliography adds to the value of this monograph.
E. A. Spiegel, Philadelphia

A detailed description of clinical and pathological aspects of diseases of the vertebral and basilar arteries is combined with studies of the arteriograms, the cerebral blood flow and metabolism. There is a careful discussion of the prevention of strokes, particularly the treatment of hypertension and of the surgical repair of the carotid, vertebral, subclavian and innominate arteries. Neurologists as well as cardiovascular surgeons will benefit from a study of this volume.
E. A. Spiegel, Philadelphia

From the writings of the psychiatrist and philosopher A. Storch, who emigrated to Switzerland in 1933 and died there in 1962, thirteen treatises have been selected. They show his early evolutionist approach (mental diseases as a regression to archaic States of mind), his later espousal of existentialism (Heidegger, Binswanger), and his continued therapeutic endeavors; many case histories are added as well as parallels from the works of borderline geniuses.
H. Adolf, Philadelphia

The author is no modern-day Machiavelli but an urbane and scholarly investigator of our great weakness — the pursuit of self-deception. In his search for valid ethical criteria for lying he has explored topics such as the state of matrimony, propaganda, religion and the psychology of clothes. With his lucid style and his iconoclastic comments the book should appeal to many in medicine as well as in the ancillary professions.
H. Freed, Philadelphia

There is a definite need for the clinical neurologist to keep informed about the numerous recent techniques that may be helpful in diagnostic refinements. The papers collected in this volume provide an excellent orientation in this direction.
E. A. S.

In this monograph the microscopic structure, onto — and phylogenesis and physiological function of the subcommissural organ (SCO) are outlined. The organ has an intense secretory activity. It is suggested that the subcommissural organ participates in the regulation of the salt and water metabolism of the organism by its antidiuretic effect. Its electrocoagulation decreases the aldosterone production. The existence of a SCO-pineal system is suggested, but further work on this problem is needed.


From Eugen Bleuier, who was an early, if not uncritical, follower of Freud, to Manfred Bleuler, his successor, the Zürich Burghölzli has always aimed at combining both approaches. The author discusses their psycho-pathological and psycho-social encounter, evaluating the scientific bases of both disciplines and stressing that psychoanalysis should not be considered a static entity but a movement. To a certain extent, this movement has peacefully penetrated the classic school psychiatry by forcing the psychiatrist to meet the patient in the unprotected but fruitful regions of transference and countertransference.


In this symposium held in Bern the syndrome of the aortic arch, the intestinal disturbances due to impaired arterial circulation and renal arteriography are discussed. For the neurologists particularly the diagnostic and therapeutic problems of the aortic arch syndrome, with special reference to cerebrovascular insufficiency will be of interest. Senn considers a surgical intervention justified in all cases with carotid or vertebral stenoses resulting in cerebrovascular insufficiency.


In recent years the interest in electromyography of the laryngeal musculature has been increasing. By this method the part played by the individual intrinsic and extrinsic laryngeal muscles during respiration, in phonation and in various types of voice disorders could be analyzed. The techniques employed and the results obtained are well summarized and illustrated in this volume, that will be of interest not only to laryngologists but also to neurophysiologists and clinical neurologists.


Following a critical historical survey, the author bases his study upon the rich material of the Vienna Psychiatrie University Clinic. He analyzes the influence of age, sociologic background, the psychopathology of "fixation" and "psychotic"
formation”. He considers the search for a specific psychodynamic of a certain syndrome such as paranoia rather unpromising. In a specific case, however, the knowledge of the influence of previous damage, degree of intelligence and hereditary factors upon the manifestations of the syndrome seems of importance for psychotherapy. 

E. S.


Electromyographic studies in 319 patients and 125 normal individuals showed that there is no pathologic electromyographic activity that would be specific for a certain disease. Fasciculation potentials and impulse series of high frequency indicate overactivity of motor anterior horn cells or of peripheral motor fibers; they may appear in degenerative processes preceding clinical signs of muscle denervation, but also in chronic painful conditions. Fibrillation potentials appear not only in muscle degeneration but also in ischemia and nerve compression. The "multiplets" found in experimental ischemia in the postischemic phase are probably due to increased excitability of the motor endplates and are not characteristic for tetany.

On compression of the upper arm, there is first an increase, then a decrease of the excitability of motor and sensory fibers. 

E. S.


These catamnestic studies of patients who showed paranoid or paranoid-hallucinatory symptoms for the first time after their 40th year of life attempt primarily to establish prognostic criteria for this type of patients. Acute starting with severe anxiety and confusion seems to give a better prognosis than slowly developing paranoid-hallucinatory syndromes with schizophrenic symptoms. The prognostic significance of constitutional factors and of poor social conditions is emphasized. E. S.


The papers read at this symposium by excellent specialists in this field deal with the Parkinson syndrome on a very wide base. Numerous new results are presented; it is also shown, however, how many problems are still controversial. The interest in the Parkinson syndrome became acute when it became possible, chiefly due to the stereotactic operations developed by Spiegel and Wycis, to perform an effective operative treatment. It’s pointed out why the Parkinson patient needs special medical care. The new possibilities of drug treatment and new biochemical studies of the dopamine metabolism by Barbeau, Hornykiewicz and their colleagues are outlined. The Parkinson syndrome induced by drugs is also dealt with. In a discussion of the operative possibilities, interesting electrophysiologic and clinical observations, particularly those made during campotomy are presented. The book offers an excellent, well balanced survey of the most recent state of the whole Parkinson research.

T. Riechert, Freiburg i. Br. (Germany)