

Atlas of Neuropathology. By WM. BLACKWOOD, M.B., F.R.C.S.E., T. C. DODDS, F.I.M.L.T., F.I.B.T., and J. C. SOMMERVILLE, A.I.M.L.T. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone, Ltd. Cr. 4to. 212 pp. 262 illus. Price 35s.

"The purpose of this atlas," the authors write, "is to try to present to clinicians or pathologists beginning the study of neuropathology the most important pathological conditions in a clear and simple way. It is intended for use in conjunction with the examination of actual specimens and preparations, with a systematic course of lectures or a textbook of neuropathology."

The 262 photographs and diagrams, about half of which are of macroscopic brain specimens, are excellently produced, and very well selected for the purposes of elementary exposition. Effective use has been made of colour photography, notably in the illustrations of meningitis, kernicterus, and the sections of pituitary adenomata. There are a number of helpful diagrams, as, for example, those explaining the effects of intracranial space occupying lesions, or the shear strains in head injuries. The general plan of the atlas is that the left-hand page gives a brief comment upon the subjects that are illustrated on the right-hand page, and this method makes for easy reading. There is so much sound teaching in this volume that one hesitates to complain that the needs of the post-graduate student have been underrated. Yet one cannot but reflect that, in an atlas intended to supplement a textbook, the authors have not altogether grasped their opportunity to produce, not indeed a work of reference, but at least a fairly comprehensive set of microphotographs. Schilder's disease, cerebellar lesions and the amaurotic idiocy group of diseases, for instance, are quite inadequately represented.

Readers for one of the more exacting diplomas in psychological medicine would certainly welcome a little more detailed information of this sort, and this could be easily supplied in a later edition without extra expense by sacrificing some of the illustrations that so often appear in students' textbooks, such as the pictures of massive haemorrhages or some of the better-known tumours.

R. M. NORMAN.

Observations on the Pathology of Hydrocephalus. By DOROTHY S. RUSSELL. Medical Research Council Special Report Series No. 265. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1949. Pp. 138. Price 6s.

This authoritative monograph is based upon the autopsy findings in 51 cases investigated by Professor Russell during the past 17 years at the London Hospital and the Nuffield Department of Surgery, Oxford. It is a wholly satisfying account of the very diverse morbid anatomy of hydrocephalus, supplemented by 90 excellent illustrations.

After a short historical survey of the subject, the various types of lesion causing obstruction to the circulation of the C.S.F. are described under the chapter headings of maldevelopments, gliosis of the aqueduct, inflammations, dural sinus thrombosis and thrombophlebitis and neoplasms. A final section deals with the anatomical effects of hydrocephalus, including the false diverticulae and fistulous openings caused by C.S.F. breaking into or through the ventricular walls. Among the many important observations recorded by Professor Russell it is possible to mention in this short review only a few facts of special interest. While the normal range of variation in the calibre of the aqueduct is not precisely known, it is likely that quite a mild degree of narrowing may prove dangerous. Simple stenosis is, however, rare, the commoner form of maldevelopment consisting in a bifurcation of the aqueduct into two narrow channels, one of which often becomes obliterated. On the other hand, occlusion or partial occlusion of the aqueduct by overgrowth of the subependymal neuroglia is not a malformation, but is probably the consequence of widespread low-grade inflammatory change affecting the ependyma.