

The results, however, are somewhat disappointing, for the papers serve only to emphasize how meagre is our present knowledge and how much remains to be discovered. Rational methods of therapy are hardly within sight, for the many inexplicable variations and contradictions that are encountered show how many and important are evidently the factors that still remain to be discovered.

The book has the inevitable fault of scrappiness, for its several parts have no co-ordinating brain; but it has the advantage that it covers a wide field. Most of what is known is either described in the book or referred to, so the psychiatrist who wishes to find the present knowledge on some point may well find the book useful for providing him with either an authoritative article or at least with a starting point.

W. ROSS ASHBY.

The Diagnosis of Nervous Diseases. By the late JAMES PURVES-STEWART and C. WORSTER-DROUGHT. Tenth edition. London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1952. Pp. 962. 388 illustrations. Price 50s.

This book, which has been familiar to us all for many years, now appears in a new guise under the guiding hand of C. Worster-Drought. Before his death in 1949 Sir James was able to approve most of the work.

The book has been well brought up-to-date, and apart from a few small printers' errors is very well produced and a credit to the new author. It is more than twice the size of the original edition.

Will modern writers *never* get rid of the word *amentia*, which, we continually point out, in Holland corresponds to confusional insanity and in its Italian form "*amenza*" is, again, confusional states? The word *oligophrenia* has no ambiguous meaning and should be used.

There are few criticisms to make, but do modern neurologists really regard previous lead poisoning as one of the contributory causes of arterio-sclerotic dementia?

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Foundations of Neuropsychiatry. By STANLEY COBB. Fifth edition. 1952. Baltimore: The Williams & Wilkins Company. Pp. 287. Price 24s.

This well-known book needs no recommendation from us. It has always been a popular book, and now the author has added a chapter on general neuro-physiology and generally brought the remaining chapters up to date.

In the author's pyramidal diagram one would have liked to see some connecting lines (even dotted ones!) between clinical psychiatry and the basic sciences of physiology, neurology and experimental psychology. It is a pleasure to see the word *feed-back* appearing in a book dealing with psychiatry, and, as Brazier has said elsewhere, it is impossible to overestimate the changes that are taking place in our conception of the working of the nervous system.

The author gives a pithy account of the use (or misuse) of the words *functional* and *organic*. He wisely points out that—

- (a) No biological process goes on without change of structure.
- (b) Whenever the brain functions there is organic change.
- (c) The brain is the organ of mind.

The implication in all this, viewed from the standpoint of psychosomatic medicine, should be obvious to all psychiatrists. Russell-Brain's "guess" that in the nervous system we are looking at the threads of a tapestry while in the mind we perceive the pattern is well put. One author points out that a sign for every thought is "too much to believe," and then tritely says that the 26 letters of the alphabet arranged in their various combinations and permutations "do remarkably well"! Altogether this is a most stimulating and provocative book.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Abnormal Psychology. By D. B. KLEIN. A revised edition of Edmund Conklin's *Principles of Abnormal Psychology*. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1951. Pp. 589. Price 40s.

This is a revision of Edmund S. Conklin's *Principles of Abnormal Psychology*, first published in 1927. A great deal of the book has had to be entirely re-written and this Professor Klein has done very well. The original book was very popular, and we are sure that this new edition will be just as popular.