

**Selected Writings of Sir Charles Sherrington.** Edited by D. DENNY-BROWN, M.D., F.R.C.P. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1939. Pp. xiv + 532. Price 25s.

This volume has been compiled as a testimonial by the neurologists who form the guarantors of *Brain*. The selection of Sir Charles Sherrington's writings is based on their importance from the viewpoint of clinical neurology. Many papers which are of importance but easily accessible are omitted.

The papers are devoted to the distribution of the motor and sensory nerve-roots, the sensory nerves to muscles, the spinal animal and the nature of spinal reflex activity, some particular features of spinal and bulbar reflexes, the anatomical course of reflex connections in the spinal cord, reciprocal innervation, the co-ordination of antagonists, postural reflexes, the motor area of the cerebral cortex, the nature of excitation and inhibition, and the quantitative management of contraction in lowest level co-ordination.

The presentation of a series of papers like this must give the present generation food for thought.

It is only a fraction of the work that Sir Charles published, but gives a splendid idea of the quantity and quality of work that can be done by a brilliant worker.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

**Modern Clinical Psychiatry.** By A. P. NOYES, M.D. London: W. B. Saunders & Co., 1939. Second edition. Pp. 570.

The author attempts to consider the major psychoses and neuroses as personality reactions to everyday social contacts. The classification adopted is that of the American Psychiatric Association. A chapter on psychiatry and general medicine is added at the end of the book. We would like to have seen this chapter at the beginning of the book and more emphasis placed on it. British psychiatry as a whole probably differs from American psychiatry in the emphasis put on the relationship to general medicine in this country and on reaction type in America. The chapter on psychopathic personality is well done, but the classification proposed by Kahn seems to cover all possible types of personality; we would like to see a much more circumscribed classification. Quite a number of the types would come under the psychoneuroses.

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**Sleep and Wakefulness.** By N. KLEITMAN. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939. Pp. xii + 638. Price 30s. net.

This is a very well-written book and proves a mine of information. It is divided into eight parts dealing with functional differences between wakefulness and sleep, the course of events during the sleep phase, periodicity, interference with the sleep-wakefulness cycle, spontaneous changes in the sleep-wakefulness cycle, means of influencing the sleep-wakefulness cycle, states resembling sleep, theories of sleep.

The most interesting section is the one dealing with the theories of sleep; this is divided into four chapters dealing with neural theories, humoral theories, sleep-centres and an evolutionary theory. The writer discusses the various neural theories, only to dismiss them all. Pavlov's theory receives short shrift, as does Claparède's theory of a sleep instinct. The biochemical, toxic and vegetative theories are all discussed, only to be rejected as insufficient.

The author regards wakefulness as one of the keystones of the building of sleep. He puts forward an evolutionary theory of sleep which is briefly that