CLINICAL NEUROSURGERY

Clinical Neurosurgery. Proceedings of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, Los Angeles, California. 1955. Vol. 3. Edited by Raymond K. Thompson, M.D. and Ira J. Jackson, M.D. Pp. xiv+261. Figures 130. 80s. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox Ltd. 1957.

This is the third volume of a series of monographs to establish a permanent record of the work presented at the annual meeting of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons of the year 1955. Dr. Carl W. Rand is the honoured guest of this volume.

In the first article Dr. Rand discusses pituitary tumours. It is an exhaustive description, not only of the symptoms of the various types of tumours, but also of the operative technique and the results in 100 cases. The next article, by the same author, is on the histological changes in the human brain consequent to head injuries. This is a detailed description of the histological changes occurring in all structures and cells of the brain. The article is richly illustrated.

Another article, again by Dr. Rand, discusses brain tumour and spontaneous subarachnoid haemorrhage as complications in pregnancy. He tends to the view that in both of these complications surgery, without interruption of the pregnancy, should be carried out if the condition of the patient is critical. There follows a symposium on Carotid Artery thrombosis by a number of authors. Important here is the treatment, and it seems that surgery is playing an important rôle. Problems in consciousness and coma, by Russel Meyers and other authors, is a good contribution to this very complex subject. Hypothermia and hibernation in neurosurgery, by Sweet and Koons, gives briefly the essential points on how to perform this procedure and its advantages.

These articles are all of major interest and will have a wide appeal to the medical profession.

H.L. de V.H.

YEAR BOOK OF PATHOLOGY

Year Book of Pathology and Clinical Pathology—1956-1957 *Series*. Edited by William B. Wartman, B.S., M.D. Pp. 509. 158 Figures. $7.00. Chicago: Year Book Publishers, Inc. 1957.

The volume of current medical literature is such, even in narrow and specialized fields, that there are few people who have the time available to keep pace with the reading required to cover recent publications. This problem is further accentuated by the large number of medical journals in circulation, so much so that even a well-stocked medical library must have serious gaps on its shelves. However, the hiatus thus created has been so admirably filled by the Year-Book publications that they must now be regarded as an indispensible item of current medical literature to the general practitioner, specialist and academician alike.

This edition in which articles are summarized as briefly as possible without loss of their essential character and meaning, maintains the high standard of editing set by previous editions. The essential core of an article is extracted and yet is presented in a form which reads easily. Added to many of the articles is an editorial comment which is often thought-provoking and stimulating in itself as well as providing the reader with cross references to articles of a similar nature that have appeared in preceding editions.

Not only do I underline and commend the principle of the Year-book series but find the standard of this volume not wanting in comparison with previous editions.

C.J.U.

IRON AND COPPER IN LIVER DISEASE

Eisen, Kupfer und Eiweiss am Beispiel der Leberkrankheiten. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Haemochromatose und der hepatocerebralen Degeneration. Von Priv.-Doz. Dr. J. Lange. Mit einem Geleitwort von Prof. Dr. P. Martini. viii+89 Seiten. 37 Teils mehrfarbige Abbildungen. DM 13.50. Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1958.

In his introductory paragraph the author emphasizes the significance of having sufficient consumption of iron to comply with the daily requirements. It is also pointed out that lack of iron inevitably leads to hypochromic anaemia, and iron poisoning can be brought about by feeding dogs on large doses of iron in the vicinity of 200 mg./k.Wt. Iron is known to play an indispensable role in the haemoglobin molecule. The same holds true for myoglobulin and enzymes with special emphasis on the part played by globulin in the process of iron transport. Iron is said to be bound to β-globulin which is generally called transferrin. Excessive intake may result in excessive deposition in the liver giving rise to haemosiderosis or haemochromatosis. The normal intake/output balance is maintained by various channels eg. gastro intestinal urinary tract and skin.

Copper is regarded as a primitive oxygen carrier. The total quantity in the human body amounts to 100-150 mg. of which the majority is deposited in the liver. It is thought to play an indispensable role in mono- and poly-phenoloxydase. It would appear from experimental evidence that the great bulk of copper excretion occurs *via* the biliary system, which explains why it is increased during attacks of obstructive jaundice and obstructive infective hepatitis. The increased concentration is a possible sequel to diminished β-globulin production which is postulated

to be the carrier substance during the process of copper excretion. Increased copper deposit in the brain associated with liver degeneration depicts the condition known as Westpahl-Strumpel Wilson disease, a progressive lenticular invasion associated with liver cirrhosis, glial changes and large quantities of copper deposits in the basal ganglia. The author also discusses the possible forms of treatment inclusive of increased protein administration, B.A.L., A.C.T.H., cortisone, penicillamin, and coeruplasmin. Penicillamin is thought to have definite beneficial effects. The latest in treatment appears to be a substance called coeruplasmin which, when injected intravenously, substitutes the congenital or familial deficit which is generally required for the proper transport and excretion of copper.

D.J.H.