

well beyond the limited readership of doctors in the pharmaceutical industry.

The book is logically divided into two parts; principles and practice are all described in 17 short chapters which between them leave no stone unturned. Each chapter is the work of an expert capable of reducing its complexities to understandable simplicity. The palm must go to Cyril Maxwell's chapter on statistical consideration in the design of clinical trials which is a veritable diamond among rubies.

The second part of the book is concerned with practical applications giving examples of evaluation of drugs used in treatment of cardiovascular disease, serum lipid control, leukaemia and, most difficult of all, the evaluation of psychotropic drugs. This merits two chapters, one by Professor Michael Shepherd and one by Professor Hamilton of Leeds. In no other pharmacotherapeutic field has the path been so beset with thorns and thistles, but the two authors between them clear a path to the relief of the depressed and the sedation of the anxious with agents which are demonstrably increasing in specificity and effectiveness each year.

More than a few practitioners have at one time or another been interested in therapeutic evaluation and assessment and many have found how easy it is to go wrong. The time to recognize this is during the planning of the trial and not in uncomfortable retrospect when a colleague shoots the published report as full of holes as a colander. To those who plan to set up trials this is required reading, to those who take part in the trials of others it gives understanding, with a measure of sympathy, too, for the efforts of the trial organizer to tame the chimaera of the perfect clinical trial.

**Diseases of the nervous system.** Eleventh edition.

Sir FRANCIS WALSHE, M.D., D.Sc., F.R.S. and Dr JOHN WALSHE, M.B., B.Ch., Sc.D. (Cambridge), F.R.C.P. (London). Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone. 1970. Pp. 381. Price £3.00.

This fresh edition of a fully comprehensive neurological textbook maintains its division into sections dealing with the general principles of neurological disease and those chapters that give a descriptive account of the commoner diseases of the nervous system. Two excellent chapters by Dr John Walshe deal with the relationship of the liver to disturbances of the nervous system, and with lead poisoning of the nervous system.

Dr Walshe emphasizes the importance of lead as an industrial hazard involving not only the worker, but also his family, through finely powdered lead salts which can be carried into the home on the clothing. Dr Walshe is critical of the existing factory legislation which needs tightening up, as lead poisoning remains a not uncommon condition especially in childhood. He draws our attention to the important fact that lead may be the cause, too often overlooked, of a failure to thrive, of backwardness, and even of

mental defect. This chapter should be of great interest to clinicians with children in their care, and to everyone interested in mental health in childhood.

An excellent section deals with speech function and its disorders, and there are clear explanations of problems posed by diseases of the pituitary hypothalamus complex. In his discussion of epilepsy Sir Francis Walshe gives wise and timely advice on the value of optimism combined always with therapy continued for at least two or three years after an incident.

This book is easy to read and there are many high quality clinical photographs and simplified diagrams to help the reader. In no chapter are the illustrations more brilliant than in that on the various forms of muscular dystrophy; but all have been carefully chosen and give great insight into the care that has been taken over the production of the volume. The publishers are to be congratulated on this very beautiful finish as well as on the moderate price of the book, which will be in great demand both in its English text, and also in the many European languages into which it has been translated.

**The geriatric day hospital.** J. C. BROCKLEHURST, M.D., F.R.C.P. London. King Edward's Hospital Fund for London. 1970. pp. 100. Price £1.50.

Geriatric day hospitals did not exist in the UK in 1950. Now there are over 100 serving some 60 per cent of the geriatric departments in the country. The concept is that of providing active hospital treatment and rehabilitation with the 'hotel' element removed. Inevitably some patients do attend primarily for social care but the rôle of the day hospital is distinct from that of a social day centre. In fact it has been found that the creation of a day hospital increases the demand for social day centres so that the patient on discharge from hospital does not become isolated.

This booklet reports the results of three studies of geriatric day hospitals in Britain—a national survey by questionnaire, a detailed description of five day hospitals in south-east England, and a six-year study in depth of the work of one of these—the Lennard Day Hospital in Bromley.

The main reasons for attendance are strokes, arthritis and rheumatism, and 'chronic brain syndrome'. Staffing and facilities vary considerably from unit to unit. Transport is a major item of expense so that day hospitals do not necessarily save money, but they do improve the quality of patient care. The appendix enumerating the geriatric day hospitals in Britain in 1970 is, in at least one detail suspect. A unit which is not yet open (Torquay) can scarcely have had 2,000 attendances in 1968.

Although at first sight a rather flimsy production for its price this must be essential reading for all those in any way concerned with the running or planning of geriatric day hospitals, containing as it does data and pooled experience which cannot be readily obtained from any other source.