

Book Reviews

Neuro-ophthalmology. Volume 4. Edited by J. LAWTON SMITH. 1968. Pp. 413, 275 figs, refs. Mosby, St. Louis. (£14 3s. 6d.)

The report of the fourth symposium held at the University of Miami maintains the high standard and the high price of its predecessors. An innovation is a "check list" of important points given in the preface to aid the busy reader. As these are not accompanied by page references and as even the index fails to help with some of them, their usefulness is somewhat minimized.

As always there are papers on sero-negative syphilis; this time there are three. There are one or two papers which are merely case reports which one would not expect to find a place in a book like this. Most of the contributions are reviews of topics of interest to both the ophthalmologist and the neurologist. Those of mainly ophthalmic bias will already be familiar to most, such as the description of differential facial nerve section for blepharospasm.

Most of the other papers are similar to contributions by their authors to various journals, examples being the review of electro-nystagmography by Cawthorne *et al.* and the excellent appraisal of the various forms of progressive external ophthalmoplegia by Drachman. But no one can be expected to keep abreast of all medical journals and the collection of such papers here is a welcome event.

Advances in Electrophysiology and Pathology of the Visual System. Edited by E. SCHMÖGER. 1968. Pp. 475, figs, refs. Thieme, Leipzig. (£14)

In 1967 the International Society for Clinical Electroretinography held its sixth symposium in Erfurt, East Germany. This provided an opportunity for workers of the East and West to exchange views and experiences, although it was unfortunate that no American workers attended.

In the years since the society was established the range of electrophysiological studies has extended, and there are many papers on the EOG and the VER. The use of computers is making a greater contribution and there is a paper by Peterson of Stockholm on the computer analysis of their vast collection of ERG results. It is unfortunate that this theme was not pursued further, for the paper is very brief and relatively uninformative.

Despite the time that the ERG has been a standard clinical procedure it is evident that it is still not an entirely satisfactory clinical tool, although in many well defined cases it is invaluable. A section of the symposium was devoted to modifications of techniques of electroretinography in order to provide more information and it will be interesting to see how many of these find their way into routine clinical practice.

Although the society is for clinical electroretinography there is still a large number of purely experimental contributions. Most of these will be of interest to the clinical worker in this field, even the paper by Dodt and Scherer on the ERG of the lizard third eye. It is interesting to read the Russian contributions, although some require a mathematical ability not commonly found in ophthalmologists. It is evident that they are not afraid of speculation as shown by a proposal that it will be possible to assess clinically the activity of many points of the retina at the same time. This is a further attempt to introduce some form of vector analysis of the ERG but the author wisely refrains from stating how it could be done.

The ophthalmologist without an interest in this field will do well to avoid this book; it was not written for him. For the worker in the field, either clinician or the physiologist, it is a necessity. At a price of £14 it will more likely be in the library than in the worker's own possession.