

Book review

MONOGRAPHIEN AUS DEM GESAMTBEBIETE DER PSYCHIATRIE *Psychiatry Series: THE MANAGEMENT OF THE INSANE* By M. Schrenk. (Pp. 194; illustrated; DM 98.) Springer: Berlin. 1973.

It is often assumed that today's liberal and humanitarian attitude towards the insane had its immediate origin in the 'geste de Pinel' when Philippe Pinel ordered that the chains and fetters be struck off some 30 unfortunate lunatics in the Bicetre Institution. The date, 1793, may do to fix in one's mind the passing of the old and the beginning of the new, but Pinel's 'moral management' of the insane—that is, without undue violence or restraint—had been practised some 50 years earlier by other enlightened men, like Francis Willis in this country; it may even have been practised in very much earlier times in Arab institutions for the insane. It took more than half a century for it to become generally adopted.

Professor Schrenk in this excellent monograph deals mainly with developments in psychiatric practice in the first 50 years of the 19th century and concentrates on events in Germany where Pinel's moral treatment became the psychic cure-method. Professor Schrenk particularly acknowledges the debt due to the English and Scottish schools.

Even at the origin of modern psychiatry there were modes of treatment—the rotation machine, for example—which impressed by their very violence and which were as little understood as are the effects of ECT today. The 'moral management' aimed at the whole patient, his surroundings, his diet, and his social and mental stimulation. So the author of this monograph makes excursions into the architecture and the planning of new mental hospitals. One German psychiatrist in his enthusiasm for wholesome recreation made his male and female charges exercise with wooden mock-rifles to the bellowing orders of a sergeant.

The book gives a fascinating and very thorough account of psychiatry in that exciting period in history when romanticism gave violent birth to the age of reason. Yet it may be as well to remember that nearly 200 years after Pinel, political dissidents are sent to 'special' lunatic asylums in the Soviet Union where they are treated as criminals and that during the Hitler period in Germany those thought to be incurably mentally disturbed were killed.

J. SCHORSTEIN

THE OCULOMOTOR SYSTEM + BRAIN FUNCTIONS Edited by V. Zikmund. (Pp. 524; illustrated; £7.50.) Butterworth's: London. 1973.

This is a difficult book to review comprehensively, since its subject matter ranges widely from studies in the vestibular control of eye movement to observations on sleep and dreaming in relation to ocular movements. Unfortunately, some of the English is very poor and difficult or impossible to understand. Spelling errors are frequent. It is perhaps especially unfortunate that the editor's thanks to the publishers acknowledges their careful help and 'expertize' (*sic*). This language difficulty makes some of the contributions which appear to be of considerable interest hard to understand and impossible to assess. For example, the interesting paper by Gabersek and Ghiloni is marred by this sort of statement: 'Observation No 653 (Fig. 6) is a case of neuroma of the right ear affecting the tonsils.'

The symposium of which this is an account took place in 1970 in Smolenice in Czechoslovakia. As with any such collection, the quality of the contributions is uneven. The emphasis is on physiology rather than on pathology. The book is divided into six sections each covering different aspects of the general subject of eye movement. The first two are devoted to the physiology of eye movement and its control, the third to the relationship between eye movement and visual perception. The fourth deals with aspects of optokinetic nystagmus, and the sixth with the oculomotor system and postural mechanisms. The fifth section is the most unusual, and concerns itself (in eight papers) with problems of ocular movements as they relate to visual imagery sleep and dreams.

C. J. EARL

CORRECTION

In the May 1974 issue of the Journal the title of the article by D. Sengupta, Murray Harper, and Bryan Jennett should read 'Effect of carotid ligation on cerebral blood flow in baboons. 2. Response to hypoxia and haemorrhagic hypotension' (Vol. 37, No. 5, pp. 578–584).