

This little book is good value. It contains up-to-date facts which are easily accessible through the index. Some of the facts are surprising. Who would have thought that the number of tablets of aspirin sold every year in this country amount to four thousand million?

ZACHARY COPE.

## Organ of Corti

**The Organ of Corti: Its Histophysiology and Histochemistry.** By Ya. A. Vinnikov and L. K. Titova. (Pp. 253+xiii; illustrated. \$13.50.) New York: Consultants Bureau. 1964.

Until recently it has not been possible easily to learn the views of the workers behind the Iron Curtain on the physiology of hearing, and many of us have been looking forward to Haigh's translation of this comprehensive Russian work. Our knowledge of the ear and hearing has advanced rapidly during the past decade, and during the years that publication of the original and translation have taken much further work has appeared in Western literature. In the West most of the work on the ear has been biophysical and neuro-physiological, and the biochemical and evolutionary aspects of the organ of Corti, emphasized by Vinnikov and Titova, have been given less attention. It is thus interesting to view the organ from another aspect. Differences in terminology at times throughout the book might have made this difficult but for Hallowell Davis's excellent foreword. Moreover the authors' lack of close contact with Western literature on the subject shows

itself in varying degree in many sections of the work. The detailed description of excising the cochlea, which as the authors say was first described a hundred years ago, and treating it histochemically so as to examine it under the microscope without decalcification or fixation is a most notable advance, but some of the conclusions from these experiments are hard to accept, as are some from the previous experiments on living tissue.

M. SPENCER HARRISON.

## Witch Doctor

**Witch Doctor.** Traditional Medicine Man of Rhodesia. By Michael Gelfand. Foreword by Sir Roy Welensky, P.C., K.C.M.G. (Pp. 191; illustrated. 30s.) London: Harvill. 1964.

This book gives an absorbing account of medicine as practised by the *nganga* or traditional medicine man of Rhodesia. Dr. Michael Gelfand approaches his subject with sympathy as a fellow African and a colleague pursuing identical aims—removal of fear and of suffering among the Mashona. The title should, in fact, read "Anti-Witch Doctor," for the author points out that the Africans believe that all illness is caused by the activities of spirits—usually of dead relatives, especially grandfathers—and by the machinations of witches, a deep and terrifying fear of whom pervades all African society, and that one of the chief functions of the *nganga* is to counteract their malevolence.

The *nganga* claims possession by spirits as the source of his powers. To qualify as a practitioner one must be possessed by a heal-

ing spirit passed on by a deceased relative, himself a practising *nganga*. In fact most aspirants to the profession spend a period of apprenticeship with a senior *nganga*, and there is a method of obtaining a higher qualification at the bottom of a river or deep pool. The *nganga* is one of the few Africans to achieve professional status in his natural environment. He is essentially a family practitioner and not a tribal doctor, and the measure of respect accorded to him depends entirely on his professional skill and ability. Although incantation, throwing of the bones, and other appeals to the spirits are essential elements in his practice, the *nganga* has a copious materia medica or herbarium derived from leaves and roots and he does not despise cupping and other physical aids.

In fact, the *nganga* is the kingpin in African society and there is a strict code of etiquette to be maintained in the course of training and practice. The subconscious plays such an important role in the thought processes of the primitive African that the *nganga* can exercise a powerful influence over his patient, but, with the best will in the world, Dr. Gelfand reaches the sombre conclusion that the *nganga* to-day is the greatest single obstacle to African progress towards civilization on account of his position as fountainhead of African beliefs in evil spirits.

Dr. Gelfand puts us all in his debt by his careful survey of the methods of training, scope of operation, and materia medica of the *nganga*. In an introduction Sir Roy Welensky pays tribute to the debt owed by Africa to Dr. Gelfand and firmly puts his name among the immortal company of Livingstone, Schweitzer, and Huggins.

GEORGE R. McROBERT.

## Books Received

Review is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.

**Luxation Congénitale de la Hanche, Fractures du Cou-de-Pied, Rachis Cervical.** By R. Judet. (Pp. 194; illustrated. 42 F.) Paris: Masson. 1964.

**Development of Motives and Values in the Child.** By Leonard Berkowitz. (Pp. 114. 18s.) London: Basic. 1964.

**Human Diversity.** Nature and Significance of Differences among Men. By Kenneth Mather, C.B.E., D.Sc., F.R.S. (Pp. 126+vi. 21s.) Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd. 1964.

**Progress in Neurology and Psychiatry.** Annual Review, Vol. 19. Edited by E. A. Spiegel, M.D. (Pp. 682+xiv. \$14.75.) New York and London: Grune & Stratton. 1964.

**Transactions of the American Ophthalmological Society.** 99th Annual Meeting, Hot Springs, Virginia, 1963. (Pp. 796+xviii; illustrated. £7 4s.) Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1964.

**Newcastle Disease Virus.** An Evolving Pathogen. Edited by Robert Paul Hanson. (Pp. 352+xiv; illustrated. \$7.50.) Madison and Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press. 1964.

**Common Bacterial Infections.** Pathophysiology and Clinical Management. By Edwin J. Pulaski, Col., M.C., U.S. Army. (Pp. 301+vi; illustrated. £2 19s. 6d.) Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders. 1964.

**The Hemiplegic Child.** Suggestions for Home Training. By Valentine Culloty, M.C.S.P. (Pp. 16; illustrated. 2s. 6d.) London: Spastics Society. 1964.

**Head and Neck.** Manual of Human Anatomy. Vol. 2. 2nd edition. By J. T. Aitken, M.D., G. Causey, M.B., F.R.C.S., J. Joseph, M.D., D.Sc., M.R.C.O.G., and J. Z. Young, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S. (Pp. 190+vi; illustrated. 21s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1964.

**Chirurgie Orthopédique et Traumatologique des Membres, Rachis, et Bassin.** Traité de Thérapeutique Chirurgicale. Vol. 1. By R. Judet and J. Judet. (Pp. 733+x; illustrated. 156 F.) Paris: Masson. 1964.

**Angewandte und Topographische Anatomie.** Ein Lehrbuch für Studierende und Ärzte. 3rd edition. By Professor G. Töndury. (Pp. 657+xv; illustrated. DM. 88.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme. 1965.

**Progress in the Biological Sciences in Relation to Dermatology—2.** Edited by Arthur Rook, M.D., F.R.C.P., and R. H. Champion, M.B., B.Chir., M.R.C.P. (Pp. 499+xiii; illustrated. £6 10s.) London: Cambridge University Press. 1964.

**Biology Data Book.** Compiled and edited by Philip L. Altman and Dorothy S. Dittmer. (Pp. 636+xix. \$10.) Washington: Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology. 1964.

**Body Fluids and the Acid-Base Balance.** Learning Program for Students of the Biological and Medical Sciences. By Halvor N. Christensen, Ph.D. (Pp. 506+xi. £2 5s. 6d.) Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders. 1964.

**Atlas der Gynäkologischen Operationen.** By Professor Otto Käser and Dr. Franz Anton Iklé. (Pp. 729+xii; illustrated. DM. 150.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme. 1964.

**Clinical Neurology.** By Frank A. Elliott, M.D., F.R.C.P. (Pp. 688+xix; illustrated. £4 7s. 6d.) Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders. 1964.

**General Parasitology.** By V. A. Dogiel. Revised and enlarged by Yu. I. Polyanski and E. M. Kheisin. Translated by Z. Kabata, B.Sc., Ph.D. (Pp. 516+ix; illustrated. £5 5s.) Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd. 1964.

**Mental Health Act, 1959.** 2nd edition. By S. R. Speller, O.B.E., LL.B. (Pp. 155+xiii. 18s.) London: Institute of Hospital Administrators. 1964.

**Chronic and Constrictive Pericarditis.** By David H. Spodick, M.D. (Pp. 369+xiv; illustrated. \$14.75.) New York and London: Grune & Stratton. 1964.

**New Thoughts on Old Age.** Edited by Robert Kastenbaum, Ph.D. (Pp. 333+xii. \$7.50.) New York: Springer. 1964.

**Conditioning Techniques in Clinical Practice and Research.** Edited by Cyril M. Franks, Ph.D. (Pp. 328+xii. \$8.50.) New York: Springer. 1964.

**Tay-Sachs' Disease.** Edited by Bruno W. Volk, M.D. (Pp. 158+vi; illustrated. \$5.75.) New York and London: Grune & Stratton. 1964.

**Addendum 1964 to the British Pharmacopoeia 1963.** Under the direction of General Medical Council. (Pp. 91+xviii. 45s.) London: Pharmaceutical Press. 1964.