

Some authors have oriented their papers so as to tilt at quixotic windmills of a decade or two ago, but most have directed their contributions to specific and current problems. The excellent papers on spaces in the central nervous system could with advantage have come as an early section, not the last, as their findings outline the basic difficulties in defining the "barrier"—if you cannot define the spaces, then how can you allot the boundaries?

One wonders just what is the value of reproducing the discussion; so much of it is boring, raising and discussing at length points that could easily be inserted by authors in an amended manuscript. One regrets, too, that certain names are missing from the list of authors and that certain subjects are not included; for example, Kuffler and his colleagues with their recent work on the role of glial cells. Regretfully one realizes that selection has to be arbitrary and that not everyone can always respond obediently to a summons to a symposium. All the more credit to the organizers for arranging to bring together so many useful contributions. It is difficult to pick those of exceptional excellence without mentioning many others, but the paper of Donald Tower is quietly comprehensive and thoughtful; and the paper by Coxon on cerebrospinal fluid production and transport, although short and simple, is surely vital to an understanding of movement in and out of the brain substance. The section on "Substrates for Brain Metabolism" presents a number of invaluable and basic biochemical considerations and the variety of the papers demonstrates all too clearly what a wide variety of metabolic processes contribute to the "barrier", while the section on "Factors Influencing Barrier Function", the largest section in the volume, shows how many possible approaches remain to be explored. The two papers in this section by Quadbeck on the clinical side and the influences of drugs are all too short but provide grounds for much speculative thinking.

This is a valuable collection of papers, and notes most lines of progress up to the time of the symposium, the date of which, although not given, must by inference have been in 1967.

J. L. MALCOLM

GESTATION

Biology of Gestation

Edited by N. S. Assali. Vol. 1: The Maternal Organism. Pp. xi + 507. (Academic Press: New York and London, May 1968.) 252s.

NICK ASSALI already has an international reputation for his excellent studies related to different aspects of reproductive physiology. In this book he has gathered together twelve other authors and between them they cover a variety of exciting topics.

Roger Gorski contributes a chapter of 64 pages on the neural control of ovulation. This is a most valuable analysis of a very complex and topical subject. Lois Fridhandler discusses "Gametogenesis to Implantation?". Ralph Wynn has been allowed just under 90 pages to discuss the "Morphology of the Placenta". This includes some 114 references. There is no question that placental morphology is an interesting topic, but has its importance not been slightly over-rated in relation to other subjects of equal, if not greater, importance? Nick Assali and others discuss placental physiology and Hans Simmer has contributed a very comprehensive review of placental hormones, including a very complete description of our present knowledge concerning human placental lactogen (HPL). Mary Carsten has 63 pages in which to discuss regulation of myometrial composition, growth and activity and there is an account of the process of labour, puerperium and lactation by H. Vorherr. Frank Hytten and A. M. Thomson, in the last chapter, consider "Maternal

Physiological Adjustments". This chapter could have been expanded considerably.

This book will prove of immense value to all those who wish to keep abreast of up to date information in reproductive physiology, biochemistry and histology. There are few books that can equal its depth of coverage. At the same time one cannot help wondering whether some authors have not been allowed rather too much space and others too little. Readers must decide this for themselves.

NORMAN MORRIS

ROE DEER

The Roe Deer of Cranborne Chase

An Ecological Survey. By Richard Prior. With an Appendix on the Diseases of Roe Deer by Dr A. McDiarmid. Pp. xvi + 222 + 16 plates. (Oxford University Press: London and New York, 1968.) 50s.

A DECADE ago this book could not have been written by a member of the staff of the Forestry Commission. Even in the late 1950s deer were still regarded as vermin in British forests and very little attempt had been made in understanding how they lived or why they damaged trees excessively in some areas while in others the damage could be tolerated. Perhaps this accounts for the few books that have been written about the roe deer or indeed why little research has been carried out on this species until very recently. If the men who lived in daily contact with deer were ordered to exterminate them there was little likelihood that anyone would be encouraged to discover methods for conserving them. It was equally unlikely that anyone would make a prolonged and intimate study of them.

Richard Prior was one of a number of people who realized that the study of deer was an essential factor in their intelligent control. His intense interest in woodland stalking led him in 1962 to take up employment as a deer forester in Cranborne Chase. His book is a direct outcome of his experience there and reflects to a remarkable degree the complete change of attitude to deer which is now so important a part of the policy of the Forestry Commission today. While he modestly states that his account is incomplete, he has produced a book which in many respects ranks with Fraser Darling's *Herd of Red Deer* which is a classic study of that species in Scotland. Doubtless it will be the fundamental work of reference on the roe deer for many years.

Although the results of research and many of the observations are derived from a limited area, there is great value and interest in their comparison with similar work elsewhere. There remains a very great deal to learn, and everyone who knows the roe deer will find the book tremendously stimulating and full of new information. Whether it be field naturalist, forester, research worker or deer stalker there is much here to provide new lines of thought. In addition there is an authoritative appendix on the parasites and diseases of roe by A. McDiarmid.

It would be invidious at this stage to make detailed criticism. Much of the book is for the specialist and possibly some opinions expressed will later be modified in the light of experience and comparison with investigations proceeding elsewhere. As a major contribution to the intelligent management of woodland deer populations it succeeds in showing that the policy of aiming to achieve a balance between amenity, recreation and commercial necessities is attainable. It should be difficult for anyone reading this book to remain unconvinced that deer are natural occupants of our woodlands and that despite the artificiality of the environment that we have imposed upon them they can be maintained not only as a source of pleasure but also as a source of income.

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