meningitis and encephalitis and poliomyelitis. Differential diagnosis is, unfortunately, poorly done and this is really one of the few criticisms one can make of this otherwise outstanding book. Clinical text books (with only one exception known to this reviewer) approach a subject in a way which suggests the reader already knows most of the facts and the author is really performing a kindness in arranging the facts in a conventional (but often confusing) way. In clinical practice the diagnosis of encephalitis is often extremely difficult and paradoxically, the diagnosis of "encephalitis" is too readily made. For example, in one American series the substantiated diagnosis of encephalitis was made in only 30% of referred cases with that diagnosis. In another (UK) series a similar discrepancy was found. It is clear that a book devoted to viral infections of the nervous system must have an easy to follow and systematic section on diagnosis and differential diagnosis. The need for this is exemplified not only by the frequent misdiagnosis of this condition, but also by the referral of suspected cases of encephalitis to neurosurgeons, to psychiatrists, and even, in one personal case, to a gynaecologist!

The value and the use of the electroencephalogram in encephalitis is also poorly dealt with. In fact, it is not even mentioned in the index. The description of characteristic complexes in the EEG in herpes encephalitis should be attributed to Upton and Gumpert. In practice the EEG is extremely useful, often quicker and more accurate in the elucidation of the cause, than contrast studies or scans.

The third part of the book deals with chronic neurological diseases and, again, the accounts of viral infections of the developing nervous system; chronic inflammatory and demyelinating conditions; the so-called degenerative diseases—the spongiform encephalopathies; and the association of cerebral tumour and virus are quite outstanding. These sections must surely rank as the best reviews of these interesting and important subjects.

The final part of the book contains subdivisions on retinitis, labyrinthitis, myositis and vasculitis. Laboratory diagnosis is touched on throughout the book and in this final section conventional and rapid diagnostic methods are reviewed. Prevention, therapy and future prospects are dealt with separately.

In all, a thoroughly good and interesting book which will undoubtedly become a neurological classic. LS ILLIS

Nervous System Toxicology (Target Organ and Toxicology Series). Edited by Clifford L. Mitchell. (Pp 392; \$71.92.) New York: Raven Press, 1982.

The title of this book is a little misleading. *Nervous System Toxicology* suggests that the subject matter might be concerned with toxic substances, their effects on the nervous system and modes of action. In fact 258 of 373 pages are concerned with techniques of behavioural testing. There are many long descriptions of such tests, with critical assessment of their significance and limitations. There is a paucity of subject matter about toxic substances, and more concrete examples would have been helpful to substantiate the theoretical discussions. The chapter on testing of the auditory system is an exception in providing good illustrations of the application of the techniques discussed.

Consideration is given in the rest of the book to the methods and limitations of neuropathology, electrophysiology, tissue culture and neurochemistry. In contrast to the detailed discussions in the first part of the book, the brevity of these sections has of necessity led to superficial treatment.

\$71.92 is a lot to pay for an insight into the technical dilemma's and methodological controversies of the various American schools of behavioural toxicology. However, for those who are concerned with interpreting results of behavioural tests it may be useful to have available these critical assessments of the methods currently used.

PAMELA M LE QUESNE

Year Book of Neurology and Neurosurgery 1982. Edited by (neurology) Russell N De Jong and Robert D Currier, (neurosurgery) Oscar Sugar. (Pp 499; £25.) London: Year Book Medical Publishers, 1982.

The 1982 Year Book welcomes the addition of Dr Robert Currier to its editorial staff. The format of the book remains similar to those of previous editions, containing 19 sections on neurology and 11 sections on neurosurgery. As in the past it succeeds in providing a surprisingly comprehensive coverage of basic neurosciences, diagnostic and clinical studies, as well as reviewing many therapeutic aspects of nervous disease both medical and surgical.

Although the individual sections represent summaries of articles abstracted from a wide range of journals, the editors have done an excellent job in providing a readable account which in many instances

say all that is needed about the individual topic under consideration. Tables, graphs and illustrations are judiciously chosen and well reproduced.

There is something in here for everyone involved in the neurosciences. The selection has been performed with great skill and provides an easy way for the reader to acquaint himself with modern work covering topics which he might otherwise overlook. The succinct editorial comments are perhaps the highlight of the book, being brief, informal and not infrequently whimsical. Their flavour can be gathered from one example comparing various evoked potential techniques in multiple sclerosis where the editor remarks "Thirty-two of 33 (97%) patients with definite multiple sclerosis had one or more of the three types of evoked potential abnormalities. It would be lovely if these tests were also specific."

The neurosurgical section contains much that will interest both neurologists and neurosurgeons. Disc disease, vascular and haemorrhagic disease, tumours and trauma are all represented in a wide range of papers. Editorial footnotes tend to be longer in this section and frequently refer to recent conferences which make the volume even more up to date. Few clinicians can nowadays honestly boast that they keep abreast of all the literature relevant to their work. There are now a number of annual reviews, recent advances and abstracts; the choice of these tends to be a matter of personal taste. If I had to choose one, it would be this Year Book.

JOHN PEARCE

Foundations of Clinical Psychiatry. By Joseph M Strayhorn. (Pp 590; £26.50.) London: Year Book Medical Publishers, 1982.

This is the best short text book of psychiatry I have ever read. The author is an assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh, and he was assisted in his task of compiling his text book by four research assistants. They certainly did very well by him. Dr Strayhorn effortlessly reviews a large number of recently published papers in each chapter, and he writes with an engagingly personal style. He is particularly strong where most text books are weak: for example, his sections on the process of interviewing and his chapter describing guidelines for psychotherapy would be difficult for another author to equal, let alone better. The book is relatively weak on