Book reviews

ANATOMIE, PATHOLOGIE ET CHIRURGIE DU NERF FACIAL
By C. H. Chouard, R. Charachon, A. Morgon,
and H. P. Cathala. (Pp. 377; illustrated; price not
stated.) Masson: Paris. 1972.

Lesions of the facial nerve are among the most frequent of neurological disorders but they have attracted more attention from otolaryngologists than from neurologists, perhaps because the seventh cranial nerve is so very accessible to surgical intervention. There is already an enormous literature on the subject but no other book can compare in range and authority with the present volume produced by four French authors, three of them surgeons. In fact its title is rather incomplete because one third of the text refers to the clinical aspects of facial palsy.

The first four chapters provide an accurate and well-illustrated account of the detailed anatomy of the nerve and of its many variations. Then comes an account of the appropriate pathophysiology with a description of electrical testing of the facial nerve and muscles but the discussion is more superficial than in the earlier chapters. The authors dismiss latency measurement as unsatisfactory because of technical difficulties. There is little mention of the published work on the prognostic significance of either latency variations or of changes in the threshold of excitability of the facial nerve. They prefer to use sampling of motor unit patterns and the amplitude of the response to electrical stimulation of the nerve as their prognostic criteria but give no satisfactory evidence in support of their views. A further short chapter describes the methods of testing taste and their significance.

The clinical section of the book is detailed, accurate, and comprehensive. It covers all sites of facial palsy from the nucleus to the periphery and most types from osteopetrosis to idiopathic. The various aspects of conservative treatment are discussed but the views expressed on steroid therapy are not widely accepted. This section ends with a succinct but adequate account of hemifacial spasm.

The effects of malformation of the face and skull on the facial nerve are fully described. The final sections of the book contain a detailed account of facial nerve surgery in terms of the various operative approaches and of the management of the lesions revealed. The last two chapters deal with the preservation of the facial nerve during otosurgery and with the methods of plastic surgery applicable in complete, irremediable facial palsy.

This book is well illustrated, elegantly written, and attractively presented. It is by far the most exhaustive and wide ranging account of the facial nerve and its problems available in any language. There is a bibliography of nearly 1,000 references which are well chosen from the several thousand titles dealing with the subject. It can be strongly recommended to all those surgeons and physicians whose professional work or curiosity has excited their interest in this fascinating but baffling nerve.

DERYCK TAVERNER

L'ENCEPHALE Vol. 62, no. 1. By J. Delay and
F. Lhermitte. (Pp. 105; illustrated; 140F.) Doin:
Paris. 1973.

The first number of volume 62 of a long established journal devoted to neurology, psychiatry, and psychosomatic medicine contains four relatively long articles in which a number of clinical problems are reviewed. In the first there is a discussion on the physiological basis and pathological significance of laughter and this is followed by a review of delirium in old age and a re-evaluation of schizophrenia. In a final article the extrapyramidal syndromes which may follow exposure to psychotropic drugs are reviewed. The treatment is clinical rather than experimental and, at least in the present issue, the material is perhaps of more interest to those working in psychiatry than to neurologists. The articles make interesting reading and this is clearly a journal which should be available in medical libraries.

J. A. R. LENMAN

INTRACRANIAL PRESSURE: Experimental and clinical
aspects Edited by M. Brock and H. Dietz. (Pp.
383; illustrated; DM 78, US \$24.80.) Berlin—
Heidelberg—New York. Springer: Berlin. 1972.

In July 1972 the first International Symposium on Intracranial Pressure was held at the new Medical High School in Hanover, and six months later this well produced (though expensive) volume was published. That in itself was an achievement, and it differs from other conference books also in that the chairmen of each session have added a comment which includes reference to discussion. A final section summarizes the views expressed at the final meeting of chairmen about four controversial issues, and these attempt to summarize the current state of the art and give pointers to future developments. These

four chapters deal with pathophysiology of intracranial pressure, the problems associated with the various techniques proposed for clinical and experimental measurement, clinical indications for monitoring, and with definitions of terms used in connection with this emerging field of measurement. This final section makes the volume of interest not only to those already in the field, but to those who feel it is time they became familiar with it. Those attending the symposium included neurosurgeons, neurologists, anaesthetists, and basic biological and physical scientists; their papers indicate the range of interest there now is in this topic, from methodological gadgetry, through biological experiments to clinical application. The next Symposium on this topic will be in Sweden next June, and the organizers will find it difficult to better either the Hanover meeting or this conference volume.

BRYAN JENNETT

INTRODUCTION AUX TECHNIQUES ÉLECTROMICRO-PHYSIOLOGIQUES By P. Lonchamp and J. Chanelet. (Pp. 91; illustrated; F.38.) Doin: Paris. 1973.

In general the techniques of neurophysiology are learned by apprenticeship and details of methodology are generally to be found only in a few comprehensive texts or by reference to original papers. This book fills an important gap by providing a concise technical manual in which the basic techniques of experimental work with microelectrodes are described in simple terms. In the early sections different varieties of microelectrode, with details of their preparation, are described and some of the principles of recording and amplification are reviewed. A number of selected techniques for intracellular recording and stimulation in particular situations are described, and finally there is an account of methods of microinjection and microiontophoresis. The treatment is concise and quantitative and there are adequate references. This is an excellent introduction to a specialized field, and can be recommended to students carrying out experimental work in neurophysiology and research workers will find it useful.

J. A. R. LENMAN

ELECTRODIAGNOSIS OF NEUROMUSCULAR DISEASES By J. Goodgold and A. Eberstein. (Pp. 220; illustrated; £2.60.) Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1972.

It is a pleasure to recommend this book. It is well written, comprehensive, and accurate. References are adequate and well selected. I cannot think of any book more useful as an introduction to the beginner and aid to the more advanced worker. A second

edition should include more on reflex studies and single-fibre electromyography and doubtless computer processing of EMG data will merit more space in the future, but as a balanced account of the practice of electrodiagnosis at the time of writing the book is excellent.

J. A. SIMPSON

PROGRESS IN NEUROBIOLOGY (£1.95 per part.) Pergamon: Oxford. 1973.

According to a statement on the cover of this new journal, '*Progress in Neurobiology* is designed to help individual scientists keep abreast of advances in knowledge in the field of neurosciences by publishing comprehensive reviews in the various disciplines which constitute this field.'

The publishers sent only part 3 of vol. 1 for review. This part contains two papers. The first, by G. G. Somjen, is called 'Electrogenesis of Sustained Potentials'. It is a well organized argument, drawing facts from a very large literature, in favour of the opinion that the sustained extracellular currents evoked in the central nervous system of mammals by repetitive stimulation of afferent nerves or fibre tracts are mainly generated by glia. The question whether these sustained extracellular currents influence neurones is well discussed. This paper clearly comes near to achieving the stated aim of the Journal.

The other paper in part 3 equally clearly does not. It is an ordinary research paper in a narrow field of insect physiology, in which no attempt is made to relate the findings to any topic except the physiology of those Hemiptera that skate on water.

G. S. BRINDLEY

DIFFERENTIALTYPOLOGIE DER POLYNEURITIDEN UND POLYNEUROPATHIEN By B. Neundörfer. (Pp. 205; illustrated; DM.98.) Springer: Berlin. 1973.

The substantial degree of interest devoted to disorders of the peripheral nerves in recent years is indicated by the fact that nearly half of this book is taken up by the references, nearly 3,000 of them, and mostly written during the past 25 years. The first part of the book consists of a review of these publications, not always entirely critically, combined with an account of the author's own experience. This is divided into considerations of the general symptomatology and the features of individual neuropathies. The approach is largely numerical, with a detailed analysis of the patterns of symptomatology throughout the range of peripheral neuropathies. The book's main value will be as a source of references: it is remarkably comprehensive.

P. K. THOMAS