Clinical Neuro Anatomy by Richard S Snell (pp 559; £14.70, \$21.95) Boston: Little Brown & Co. 1980.

A book not to be recommended to medical students or to anyone else; a pity. Dr. Snell writes in the preface; "Too many students complain of the complexity of the terminology in neuroanatomy and the difficulty they experience in understanding the relations of the different parts of the brain to one another. Unfortunately, this is often the fault of the Professor." I imagine that Dr. Snell is an enthusiastic and popular teacher of anatomy to medical students. His text is conversational and dilatory; most paragraphs and sentences could be cut to half their length. There are too many figures, photographs, microphotographs and diagrams, often repetitive and sometimes misleading and poor; all this and the rather unnecessary colour photographs of the brain probably double the size and the price. It is odd that there are no computerised axial tomography pictures in a book published in 1980. An interesting feature of the book is the clinical notes and problems after each chapter and answers to clinical problems, albeit from an anatomist, on the last thirty-five pages. Comparison with smaller texts from this side of the Atlantic like Nathan's or Brodal's is not favourable. And by the way, WH Smith's bookstalls currently sell an American reissue of Gray's Anatomy for £4.50; a better buy.

I JANOTA

Headache by Neil H Raskin and Otto Appenzeller (pp 244; £10.00) London: W B Saunders Co. 1980.

This book on headache by two experts in the field is in a series of "Major Problems in Internal Medicine". Of the nine chapters, three deal with migraine in its clinical aspects, pathogenesis and treatment. There are also chapters on tension headache, cluster headache, post traumatic headache and giant cell arteritis. Considerable research has been going on in these fields in recent years and this book gives an extremely good and up to date review of the subject. It is well written, easy to read, and I congratulate the authors on a worthy successor to Wolff's larger tome. I would

recommend it without any hesitation, not only to general physicians but to neurologists.

F CLIFFORD ROSE

Bias in Mental Testing by JR Jensen (pp 786; \$29.95) New York: Free Press, 1980.

Psychometric testing has come under fire in a number of ways. Prominent amongst these are allegations that tests are unfair or biased in that they may seriously underestimate the capabilities of subjects from disadvantaged or minority backgrounds and who lack the value systems of the educated middle classes. Such criticisms have been particularly strong in the USA especially in relation to educational and occupational selection and have resulted in a number of lawsuits.

Jensen sets out to examine the accusation of bias and concludes that "the most widely used standardised tests are not biased against any of the native-born English-speaking minority groups for whom sufficient data exists." The evidence on which this conclusion rests relates only to the American scene but, if Jensen is considered correct, would substantially help to allay similar fears in Britain. The problem is that critics are unlikely to be convinced by Jensen's arguments and would probably argue, amongst other things, that his conclusion is only apparently plausible because of a too limited definition of bias. Regardless of whether Jensen's conclusions can be considered to have settled the question (and this reviewer thinks that they do not) Jensen does a useful service in showing that many of the more extreme critics have grossly overstated their case and that any cultural bias is less self-evident and all pervasive than some assume. He also clearly indicates that the very concept of bias in this context requires more careful analysis than it usually receives in order to reach sensible conclusions. On the whole, this is a useful contribution to the literature on psychometrics but is likely to be of more direct interest to educators and those involved in personnel selection than to clinicians.

EDGAR MILLER

Textbook of Child Neurology, 2nd ed By JH Menkes (pp 695; £22.00) Philadelphia: Lea & Febiger, 1980.

Dr Menkes is to be congratulated on a diligent updating of his well-known

text on paediatric neurology. His own special interest in neurometabolic diseases is reflected in the space devoted to rare hereditary diseases which have been the subject of such intensive and fruitful research in the past decade, and which form the substance of most of the revision in the present edition. The format and chapter headings are the same as in the first edition, and once again the principal author is fortunate in having the experienced assistance of Kinsbourne, Batzdorf, Gabriel and Weil with chapters on disorders of mental development, on trauma, on malformation and on infections respectively.

In his preface, Menkes reaffirms his belief in the pre-eminence of the clinical method and acknowledges this has been uppermost in the preparation of his text. He writes slightly disparagingly of the temptation to succumb to computer diagnosis but having read the text I hesitate to accept this view.

Unquestionably those of us practising neurology believe, with Menkes, that our clinical experience enables us to recognise and diagnose rare conditions which elude lesser mortals, but are still, I suspect, dependent on the gestalt of pattern recognition. How do we identify for the first time those very uncommon conditions which we have never previously recognised? Reference to standard texts, including that now being reviewed, is, in my view, not of much help if one can judge by comparison of the descriptions of those rare syndromes with which one has some familiarity. The number of rare neurological diseases of childhood is legion, and growing and difficult to encompass, competing for neurones with the ravages of the years! Since identification of diseases is more than of academic importance for genetic and prognostic reasons, it is in this sphere that a diagnostic computer which Menkes scorns may be more useful than a text, however exhaustive the latter.

Certain mistakes in the first edition are repeated—the inclusion of a dominant form of inheritance in Friedreich's ataxia and sex-linked inheritance for Leber's hereditary optic atrophy. Surprisingly, the juvenile form of Krabbe's leucodystrophy is not mentioned, nor is white matter disease as an integral feature of Cockayne's syndrome.