venient situation for the assessment of therapy.

There is an increasing tendency to produce published proceedings of conferences and many of these serve little useful purpose. This volume on muscular dystrophy and other inherited diseases of skeletal muscle in animals is an exception. It comprises the proceedings of a symposium organised by the New York Academy of Sciences which was held in February, 1979. For a volume of this size, the publication time is commendably short. Although much of the contents of this book are available elsewhere, it serves to bring together a wide range of studies by most of those workers who are active in this field. It covers discussions of muscular dystrophy in the hamster, mouse and birds, inherited muscle disease in domestic animals and therapeutic trials in dystrophic laboratory animals. The relevance of the animal models to human disease is assessed and of inherited neurological disorders of small animals to neuromuscular interactions. It concludes with an interesting section on newer investigative techniques that are being explored. This volume maintains the high standard of the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. It is dedicated to Alexander Sandow who died the year before the symposium and who worked in New York. He contributed much to the study of the muscular contraction.

PK THOMAS

Progress in clinical neurophysiology vol 7: Clinical uses of cerebral, brainstem and spinal somatosensory evoked potentials edited by JE Desmedt (pp 352; \$82.75) Basel: S Karger, 1980.

The latest volume of this series of books re-inforces the already established vitalising influence that Professor Desmedt's editorship has had on clinical neurophysiology. The first 11 papers discuss the origins of the early components of the somatosensory evoked potentials (SEP). Some authors rely heavily on existing neuroanatomical and physiological fact for their interpretations whereas others give only cursory acknowledgement to any but the most salient anatomical features of the nervous system. Wiederholt's brave attempt to repeat and extend the human work to animals is strangely

inconclusive but valuable records of what really happens in the cortex of man is provided by Papakostopoulos and Crow who have recorded from intracranial electrodes implanted for therapeutic purposes.

The first part of the book shows the general agreement on the origin of potentials but leaves unresolved whether the potentials are due to fibre tract or to synaptic activity, most favour the latter. Essential normative data are given and the similarity of methods in different laboratories is apparent.

It is one thing for evoked potential experts to write papers for each other but to establish the clinical usefulness of the potentials is altogether more demanding. While certain abnormalities are of interest the busy clinician needs to know in what circumstances they can help diagnosis and treatment. Six papers make a worthwhile attempt at this. The use of EPs in MS is now widely known and is discussed by several authors.

Stockard and Sharborough show, with fascinating case studies, how brainstem auditory EP and somatosensory EP can be used together. Noel and Desmedt give the findings in Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease and Friedreich's ataxia and the Hallidays provide a unique contribution on the amplitude of evoked potentials in myoclonic conditions.

Inevitably some contributions or parts of them are superficial; unfortunately the vast majority of this work stems from 1977 or earlier and annoyingly, although an earlier volume recommends a sensible method of nomenclature of evoked potentials, it is not always followed. The book is a useful collection of papers and should encourage strenuous efforts to consolidate and advance the clinical use of evoked potentials.

EM SEDGWICK

The Management of Pain edited by JWF Beks (pp 402; \$46.75) Amsterdam: Excerpta Medica, 1979.

Fifteen authors contribute to the 20 chapters in this book, which contains papers presented at a symposium held in Curaçao in November 1978. Many of these presentations cover what by now is familiar ground, and whilst

from a number of chapters little new emerges, there are some highlights. Verbiest's appropriately long contribution on "Pains of spinal origin in the lumbar and cervical area" is a masterpiece of thoughtful review, commentary and summary of his very considerable personal experience—and itself justifies the book as a whole. Other useful, short and uncontroversial topics include articles on the surgical treatment of pain (Schürmann), on diagnostic, prognostic and therapeutic nerve blocks (Belopavlovic), on stereotactic surgery for pain relief and on electrical stimulation of the nervous system (both by Gybels), and an article that considers methods of measuring pain (Zwetnow). Some of the other chapters, for instance those on orofacial pain (which deals predominantly with dental pain), headache mechanisms and migraine reveal little new, and one questions the merit of repetitive publication of well-known material.

In summary, a book of patchy quality, with a few very well worthwhile contributions, and perhaps deserving a place in the library for occasional reference. However, while it is reasonably produced, it is expensive, and the presentation of some of the material which includes spelling mistakes, neologisms and ungrammatical sentences indicates lapses of editorial surveillance.

GD SCHOTT

Notices

The Volvo Awards for Back Pain Research. The Volvo Company of Göteborg, Sweden is offering three prizes of US \$3,000 each for papers submitted on (1) "Clinical Studies", (2) "Bio-engineering studies" or (3) "Studies in other basic science areas". Details are available from: Professor Alf Nachemson, Sahlgren Hospital, S-413 45 Göteborg, Sweden.

The 3rd International Migraine Symposium will be held in London, 17th and 18th September, 1980. Enquiries should be addressed to: The Director, The Migraine Trust, 45 Great Ormond Street, London WC1N 3HD.