Book reviews

Vestibular Neurotology (Advances in Oto-Rhino-Laryngology 28). Edited by P Molina-Negro and RA Bertrand. (Pp 148; Sfr115, DM138, \$69.) Basel: Karger, 1982.

This publication derives from the Symposium of Clinical Neuro-otology held in Montreal in 1980 at which, according to the authors, it was hoped to achieve a better understanding between practitioners of the various disciplines encompassed by neuro-otology. As a report of these proceedings the book must fail as it has been too long in the womb. There is no reason why proceedings should not appear within months of the event. As a source of communication between different groups of scientists and clinicians it is a little more successful.

Inevitably multi-author works are patchy in scientific content and grammatical style; this book is no exception. The neurologist will find, as usual, the chapters by Gacek on labyrinthine innervation and cupulolithiasis stimulating and clearly presented. It is a pity that the proof reader (a dying species) did not check which legend belonged to which figure! The chapter on surgery for Meniere's disease from Denmark by Bretlau and colleagues is both valuable and remarkable in that they report a double blind trial of surgery including sham operations. In this era of ethics committees it is refreshing to see a proper controlled study which shows that surgeons are wasting their time doing sacculus surgery, a result that hopefully will save patients undergoing such procedures. There is another surgical article by Ouaknine on arterial loops in the cerebello-pontine angle in which the anatomy is well illustrated, but the paper marred by a "woolly" discussion on possible ephaptic transmission underlying hemifacial spasm. Surgeons meddling in this area might, with benefit, take a leaf from the Dane's book.

The remaining chapters are an assortment of neuro-otological topics ranging from perilymph fistula through to cerebro-vascular disease. None is of high quality and the statement by Meloche that "there are sufficient data to say that aspirin has an important role in the prevention of TIAs and stroke" will come as a surprise to many neurologists.

This book cannot be recommended to the neurologists for the two or three chapters of interest.

P RUDGE

The Psychiatrist's Guide to Diseases of the Nervous System. By Richard Lechtenberg. (Pp 478; £27.25.) Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1982.

This book is prefaced by the statement that it answers the questions that psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers and other mental health professionals ask neurologists more frequently. Indeed, it is a good attempt and presents easily readable data which spans these professionals' queries, and at various levels of assumed basic knowledge. For instance, the chapter on "diagnostic tools" which includes encephalography, CSF studies, and other techniques, deals with very basic details such as descriptions of the procedures, and proceeds to include fairly detailed result interpretations. As it is aimed at a psychiatrically orientated population, it covers relevant neurological aspects of several disorders, including those of speech, cognition, affect, sexual dysfunction, sleep, movement, the special senses, seizures and headache.

Common problems are allotted a fair amount of discussion such as seizures (30 pages) and headaches and facial pain (40 pages), whereas uncommon illnesses such as rabies is given only a mention, but nevertheless the point is made that psychiatric symptoms are often the most prominent early manifestation of this disease. A syndrome "not yet assigned to strictly neurologic or psychologic causes" (author's remark) such as Gilles de la Tourette syndrome, is appropriately given three pages of the 62 devoted to movement disorders in general.

The pages on sexual dysfunction manage to cover subjects from arousal and impotence (differentiating the neurological and psychological causes and accompanying features), to the organic Kluver Bucy syndrome, delineating the conditions in which it can occur. All in all, a handy reference book, especially as it is levelled at several professions under the rubric of psychiatry.

MARY M ROBERTSON

Treatment of Cerebral Palsy and Motor Delay (2nd ed). By Sophie Levitt. (Pp 267; £11.75.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1982.

The second edition of this book is to be welcomed, and the therapist helping the physically handicapped child will gain a wealth of knowledge from the author's unique experience in this field. The importance of the parents' role is stressed

and selected parents, with guidance from the therapist, may well benefit from reading some of the chapters. The reviewer is not qualified to comment on many of the technical aspects of this book but is convinced that it explains satisfactorily many of the aims and methods used by therapists striving to help these children. Doctors who are members of the therapeutic team will read the book with profit and gain insight into the work of an allied discipline.

The eclectic approach is surely the right one so that the technique used can be suited to a particular child's needs and to the personality of the physiotherapist. As stated in the Preface the first four chapters are concerned with the principles of treatment and daily care, with discussion on how to reconcile different viewpoints. The next three chapters cover aspects of assessment, the penultimate one of the problems of deformity and the final one group therapy.

The second edition expands on aspects of learning, emphasising that physiotherapists are training as well as treating children with motor problems; and functional categories are given more importance than diagnostic ones. Although the doctor cannot be directly involved in such treatment how can it be prescribed with confidence or the results assessed if the methods remain a mystery?

NEIL GORDON

Child Psychiatry and the Law. By Diane H Schetky and Elissa P Benedek. (Pp 316; \$34.00.) New York: Raven Press, 1981.

Child psychiatry has many points of meeting with the law—the assessment of delinquents, child abuse and neglect, and custody disputes, to mention but a few. This edited volume, written largely by psychiatrists and lawyers, set out to provide "a solid theoretical and practical background in child forensic psychiatry" for professionals of all disciplines working at that interface. The law in questions is that of the USA, which differs in certain key respects from that in the UK, but the issues are ones that transcend national barriers. The first section of the book (especially that written by the editors) is full of sound, sensitive, and sensible advice on practical issues in preparing court reports and in giving evidence as an expert witness. The chapters on specific topics are more variable in quality and, in particular, the statements on empirical findings are rather mixed. For example, it is highly questionable that