Book reviews

Selected Papers of Morris B Bender. Memorial Volume. Edited by Robert P Friedland. (Pp 463; \$60.00.) New York: Raven Press, 1983.

How can one give anyone who has not been there the impression made by attending Morris Bender's round at the Mt Sinai Hospital in New York? Forget the gentlemanly and academic approach of Europeans. One suddenly found oneself immersed in an exhilarating atmosphere of rudeness and aggression, where doctors shouted each other down and argued about the patient in front of him; and the patient was treated only a little less rudely: "Look up here; do you see one or two? Jesus, you must know if you see one or two". This was interrupted by Morris Bender every now and then, with "Let the guy speak, he's a visitor"; and all this at the highest academic level, with everyone knowing all the literature, both clinical and experimental, and nearly all the answers.

How did Morris Bender run the largest practice in New York and the neurological department at the Mt Sinai Hospital and at the same time contribute a great number of the most important research papers? It is good to have many of them collected together in this volume. This is a selection of his papers on the anatomy and physiology of the oculomotor system, of visual perception and higher visual functions and on sensation and sensory perception. The latter constitutes the best body of work on lesions of the cerebral hemispheres in man since Head and Holmes. Those who do not know this work should read it.

PW NATHAN

The Nervous System (2nd Edition). By Peter Nathan. (Pp 293; £4.95.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983.

Some editions are not subjects for long and detailed reviews. The economics of publishing ensure that the book has been in demand and not only for the shelves of specialists and libraries. The paperback format attracts students and general readers. They could not find a better account of the human nervous system. It achieves the difficult feat of being at once authoritative and understandable to the reader with a minimal biological vocabulary. A generation of students was fired with the excitement and romance of atomic physics by the

writings of Jeans and Eddington. Neuroscience is the new frontier of our age but it lacks its populariser. This book does not attempt to provide a comprehensive survey of the nervous system of the animal kingdom. It is about the nervous system of man and largely at the macro level. Nevertheless it is unusual in its use of ethology to illustrate the phylogeny of human behaviour.

In less than 300 pages, the description of structure and function is remarkably adequate and interesting. I would prefer a student starting clinical neurology to have a good grasp of this book rather than the details of microelectrode neurophysiology, important as it is. There is one surprising omission which would have saddened Peter's "Boss", the mechanism and significance of shivering. The small section on controlling temperature refers only to regulation of heat loss. Nevertheless, the second edition has been well revised, particularly with regard to sensory physiology and neurotransmitters. As would be expected, the chapter on pain is particularly good without confusing the beginner with the details of supraspinal control. Specialists may regret omission of advanced work. I am sure Dr Nathan has judged well what is appropriate for his readership but he is never patronising. The book is recommended reading for all interested in the human nervous system, regardless of their expertise in particular parts of it.

JA SIMPSON

Closed Head Injury Psychological, social, and family consequences. Edited by Neil Brooks (Pp 231; £17.50.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

It is a welcome sign of the times to find a book on head injury edited by a clinical psychologist and dealing *in extenso* with the cognitive, emotional and social aftermaths. All this befits the increasing recognition that the mental sequelae of injury are a chief source of concern and of enduring disability for the great majority of victims, likewise for their families. Psychology has gradually risen to the challenge as this compilation shows.

An excellent review of the pathophysiology of head injury forms the opening chapter. The nature and course of cognitive and psychiatric changes are described thereafter, drawing on the careful observations of the Glasgow school. A special highlight is the chapter on attentional deficits,

skilfully dissected by psychologists in Groningen in Holland. Childhood injuries, social adjustment and consequences for the family receive separate attention. The concluding section describes the brave attempts underway to tackle the more disruptive behavioural aftermaths in severely damaged patients by behavioural modification techniques—pioneering work at the rehabilitation unit of St. Andrew's Hospital, Northampton.

The book will be found invaluable by those who seek to understand and help with the problems faced by head-injured patients; equally it will provide an important stimulus and reference source for those involved with research.

WA LISHMAN

Aphasiology. By Andre Roch Lecours, Francois Lhermitte and Bonnie Bryans. Preface by John C Marshall. (Pp 484; £21.50.) London: Bailliere Tindall, 1983.

The emergence and increasing involvement of linguists and other non-medical specialists in the field of aphasia, desirable though it is, has complicated matters for the neurologist who does not understand their terminology. There can be little doubt that the linguists have a similar problem with neurological terminology. The idea of this book was conceived by Lecours in Quebec at a combined meeting in which one of the participants who was not a neurologist was alleged to have reported that the recorded jargoned language of the deceased aphasic patient under discussion was "easier to understand than that of the neurologist and speech pathologist from the Hotel Dieu". Lecours determined to tackle this problem and has with colleagues of various disciplines produced an interesting volume. Different parts are written from the standpoint of different specialists but for the sake of integration all are co-authored by Lecours. Obviously the neurologist will still find some chapters much easier to understand than others. Help is at hand in the form of a chapter devoted entirely to terminology, linguistic and neurological, which the reviewer found a useful guide to the proliferating jargon of the subject.

The volume is a translation (by Bryans) of a French version. Much has been written in French on aphasia and the monoglot English speaking neurologist will welcome easier access to this literature. Of the 13 authors, 10 are French, 21 Canadian (20 writing from Quebec) and two American.