at least as impressive, recently, in the field of mental handicap and Dr Russell's book provides a refreshing contemporary account of these advances. It will be compulsive reading for established practitioners, particularly those with responsibility for teaching medical students and for postgraduate trainees in general psychiatry. These include studies of epidemiology and prevalence, the fragile X syndrome, autism and childhood psychoses. They also cover the resurgence of interest in family processes and the role of the psychiatrist in treatment.

Perhaps the weakness, if any, is failure to relate the earlier scientific advances for example in epidemiology to the final section on policy and planning of services but this is a minor criticism of a book which may be otherwise thoroughly recommended.

JA CORBETT

Evoked Potentials II. The Second International Evoked Potentials Symposium. Edited by Richard H Nodar and Colin Barber. (Pp 711; £82.00.) Sevenoaks: The Butterworth Group, 1985.

This volume contains 80 of the papers presented at the second international evoked potentials symposium held in Cleveland, USA in 1982. Reviewers of such works express reservations concerning the variable quality of contributions and the existence of more detailed and authoritative accounts in the scientific journals. I will not therefore bore the reader by reiterating these inevitable criticisms of a work of this kind.

The contents are structured according to which sensory system is studied and whether the data concern normal subjects or clinical applications. There are important additional sections on Background and Perspective; Measurement and Analysis; Psychological Correlates; Drug and Metabolic Effects and Monitoring and Multimodal Application of Evoked Potentials. The quoted references are all collected into a 48 page penultimate section which must avoid some repetition but deprives those readers who do not read papers from A to Z of an important means of assessing a paper. The index has been thoroughly prepared.

Here and there one finds the book touched by scholarship, particularly among the experimental papers which use evoked potential techniques to test neurophysiological hypotheses. It is a matter of regret that many clinical papers merely describe abnormalities seen in this disease or that, with only the weakest intellectual effort to relate findings to the pathophysiology of

neurological disease or to the clinical usefulness of the test. Happily there are exceptions to this statement and WB Matthews chapter entitled "How do evoked potentials help the clinician?" should be read by everyone concerned with patients. His question is everyone's question and we should all make better efforts to answer it.

Those interested in technical developments will find papers on a variety of techniques of stimulation, recording and analysis including magnetic field recording and topographical analysis. One curiosity is a paper describing the effects of magnetic fields on visual evoked potential, a topic which will be of interest to those involved in magnetic resonance scanning.

Nearly all readers will find something of interest in this book but the cost is high and a lot has happened in the exciting world of evoked potentials since these papers were written in 1982.

EDM SEDGWICK

The Biochemistry of Migraine. By MJ Eadie and JH Tyrer. (Pp 216; £39.50.) Lancaster: MTP Press Ltd. 1985.

The book is divided into four unequal parts. The clinical aspects of the subject are necessarily considered first, and although brief, are adequately covered in the first 39 pages. The second, and most important aspect and relevant to the title of the book, deals with the reported biochemical changes in relation to migraine. This is a very comprehensive review of the roles of serotonin, catecholamines, histamine, bradykinin and prostaglandins. Precipitating factors are also reviewed including glucose changes, circulating free fatty acid levels, various amines, and sex hormones. GABA cAMP, enkephalins and endorphins, amongst others, are considered under the heading of the biochemical consequences of migraine. The effect of exogenous substances on migraine are also considered. The third part of the book is concerned with pathogenesis, and considers some of the well documented hypotheses, but does not offer anything new. Finally, there is a short chapter on cluster headache.

The authors also include a chapter on suggested future investigations, clinical physiological as well as biochemical. Throughout the book the list of references is very comprehensive and makes it a very useful addition to medical libraries, although the cost may seem high for practising clinicians for whom it is intended.

KJ ZILKHA

Dysphagia: Diagnosis and Management. Edited by Michael E Groher. (Pp 258; £37.50.) Sevenoaks: Butterworth Group, 1984.

This is a valuable small book dealing comprehensively with a symptom whose import spreads over many disciplines. Nine contributors deal with the anatomical and physiological control of swallowing, neurological disorders causing its disturbance, and mechanical disabilities producing dysphagia. The most important sections concern the management of swallowing disorders. As is often the case in American medical practice, a collaborative multidisciplinary approach is emphasised. There will be many ways in which the organisation of care of patients with dysphagia in this country would be different, but the book serves a very useful purpose by acquainting workers in one field such as neurology with the contributions that can be made, say, by otolaryngologists. This team approach is no bad thing in concept, and the promotion of better understanding of what others have to offer is well worthwhile.

I do believe that anyone dealing with patients troubled by dysphagia will find useful advice in this work. The book is slightly marred by the mediocre quality of the paper which does not do justice to any of the half-tone illustrations. The references are comprehensive but the index is rather skimpy.

HAROLD LUDMAN