Book reviews

a specific test involving cell motility in an electrical field.

Following a description of the pathophysiology of the disorder, there is a review of treatment which includes a consideration of immunotherapy, plasmapheresis, dietary treatments, anti-infective treatment and the recently controversial use of hyperbaric oxygen. The clinical trials involved in assessing these various treatments are critically reviewed and Matthews considers the means of managing specific symptoms arising in the course of the disease, that is, psychological problems, tremor, spasticity and others. The book finishes with two elegant chapters on current views of the immunological and the genetic aspects of the disorder and the neuropathology of the disease.

Beautifully produced and well-indexed this volume is essential for all those involved in clinical neurology and with the investigation of the problems of multiple sclerosis. Hopefully in years to come further editions will keep us equally up to date with developments and an improved understanding of multiple sclerosis but here with the 1985 volume we have as good a review of the problem as exists in the world literature.

JB FOSTER

chemistry involved in cerebral artery spasm.

In each of the remaining sections there are some very good chapters on practical problems such as trigeminal neuralgia recurring after treatment and adjacent chapters on different ways to manage tumours of the pineal region. The section on orbital tumours gives an over-view of this corner of neurosurgery and the last four chapters in the hydrocephalus section address in a pragmatic way the recurring problems concerning hydrocephalus.

I have found this series of books to be of great value, as they represent a form of recently updated neurosurgical textbook. This volume is no exception and if it is picked up by any neurosurgeon in training, I suspect he would feel a strong compulsion to read it from cover to cover. More experienced neurosurgeons may not agree with everything that is said, but will find the other chap's point of view put forward forcefully and in a clear manner.

RA JOHNSTON

Principles of Neurologic Diagnosis. By Erwin B Montgomery, Michael Wall, Victor W Henderson. (Pp 286; £13.70.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1985.

This American book provides a welcome change from the usual textbooks in which a description of neuro-anatomy followed by disorders of the various neurological systems. There are similarities with *Practical Neurology*, by WB Matthews, which is a gem. Here, chapter headings are entitled, "Right-sided Weakness" and "Left Gaze Paresis", "Galactorrhea and Double Vision", "Sudden Difficulty Speaking". The approach is one of short clinical presentations of typical cases and a logical thinking-aloud of the thought process involved in reaching an anatomical diagnosis. The authors are to be congratulated on the simplicity of the text and the simple but adequate line drawings which are always on the page facing the relevant text. This makes it easy to assimilate the anatomical pathways. Many drawings were repeated several times in the book. They described the features which would lead one, for example, to conclude that the corticospinal tract was involved in a lesion, for example, brisk jerks and a positive Babinski sign, but as with many neurological texts, they do not adequately describe the various patterns of weakness typical of, in this case, a pyramidal

lesion but in others a cortical lesion; or, in others, perhaps a root distribution. There are several unfortunate errors in the text, which should have been spotted in proof reading and may perhaps confuse the inexperienced reader. There are some left/right confusions as well, and a left homonymous field defect is clearly demonstrated when a right one should have been shown (p.127). The section on pharmacological tests on the pupils in Horner's syndrome is not a model of clarity. The anatomy, however, in relation to language disorders, lacunar syndromes, and the significance of doll's eye movements were particularly well covered. There were some inconsistencies in nomenclature, for example, Cheyne Stoke's respiration was defined in detail, yet words such as diencephalon, corona radiata and anisocoria were introduced without any explanation.

Although the authors decry the use of rote learning, it becomes clear that in cases involving the peripheral nervous system it would be impossible to work out the anatomy without the extensive innervation charts provided.

In general, I think this is a book that should be thoroughly recommended for medical students and I suspect it will find its way onto a lot of residents' and consultants' shelves. The frequent anatomical drawings are particularly valuable.

With a little attention to detail in the text, I would recommend this warmly and at £13.50 it represents a welcome change from the expensive text books that are usually presented.

JE REES

Clinical Neurosurgery. (Congress of Neurological Surgeons Vol 32.) Editor-in-Chief: John R Little. (Pp 680; £54.00.) Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1985.

This book is the published proceedings of the 1984 Meeting of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons of America, and comprises 660 pages divided into seven sections. The first section contains the presentations by Dr Rizzoli who was the honoured guest and he gives a fascinating and first-hand account of Dr Walter Dandy's contribution to neurosurgery. There is also an interesting chapter on "Dandy's brain team" and the life of a neurosurgical resident at that time.

There are sections on cerebro-vascular surgery, cerebello-pontine angle tumours, trigeminal neuralgia, pineal tumours, orbital tumours and hydrocephalus. Most of the chapters have a strong clinical bias and are generally well-written and adequately illustrated. There is a very good chapter on cerebral arterial spasm which, for me at any rate, encapsulates the scientific knowledge to date behind this serious neurosurgical problem, especially for those without a detailed background in the intricate bio-

Neurobiology: Molecular Biological Approaches to Understanding Neuronal Function and Development. (UCLA Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology. New Series Vol 24.) Edited by Paul O'Lague. (Pp 212; £52.00.) New York: Alan R Liss Inc, 1985.

The work is a record of one of the UCLA Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology which were established in 1972, to provide an interdisciplinary forum for scientists involved in new developments in biological research. The present volume presents new developments in the molecular biological approach to understanding neuronal function and development.

The book contains a series of detailed papers dealing with cytoskeletal archi-

texture, receptors and growth factors, gene expression and multigene families, membrane channels, intracellular messengers, neuropeptides and transmitter plasticity, and organisation principles in the development of neuronal networks. And all of this, within less than 200 pages! So, as one might imagine, the book contains 18 specialist chapters organised as well as possible into four basic sections dealing in turn with cell adhesion, intercellular and cell-virus interactions, cytoskeletal architecture, neuropeptides and growth factors and intracellular messengers and ion channels. While individual contributions are sound, the book is certainly one for specialists in this specific research area. Not a volume for libraries since, no doubt, much of the data provided will have already been superseded by more recent advances. At £52, not a book many will give more than a passing glance.

P JENNER

The Delusional Misidentification Syndromes. (*Bibliotheca Psychiatrica No 164.*) Edited by GN Christodoulou. (Pp 154; £30.70.) Basel: S Karger AG, 1986.

The title of this book refers to a set of curious and apparently rare phenomena in which one individual misperceives the identity of another individual. In its most common variant, Capgras syndrome, the patient has a fixed belief that a person, usually very close to the patient, has been replaced by a double. In the conceptually linked but opposite phenomenon known as Fregoli's syndrome, the patient misidentifies a stranger, as someone familiar. In addition to these major examples of the misidentification syndrome complex, the book presents in its chapters, a host of variants which have been described in the literature.

Capgras himself used the words "curious little syndrome" to describe the disorder now named after him. The same adjectives might also be used to describe this book. The size is no doubt a reflection both of the rarity of the set of disorders and of research interest in it. The "curiosity" of the book might refer to the diversity of the chapters contained within it. These include a biography of Capgras, and a "review" of possible references to misidentification syndromes in ancient mythology, folklore and literature. In contrast, there are also chapters on the neurology and neuropathology of patients with misidentification syndromes.

The rarity of the disorder is reflected in the fact that an apparently exhaustive review of reports of Capgras syndrome could come up with only 106 cases from the world's literature. It is thus not surprising that the chapters which present original information are based on small group or single case studies. Perhaps because of this, the descriptions of the phenomenology are extremely detailed and represent perhaps the strongest feature of this book. While attempts are made to link this phenomenology with such diverse conditions as schizophrenia, temporal lobe epilepsy and prosopagnosia, as well as psychoanalytic interpretations, little emerges in the way of cohesive theory. Perhaps this is inevitable given the probable heterogeneity which underlies such a syndrome, as well as its obvious complexity. However, despite this, the book is a fertile source of clinical description and imaginative speculation. While there are probably few individuals who would find this book essential reading, it would serve as a useful addition to any library.

R BROWN

Multiple Sclerosis Research in Europe. Edited by OR Hommes. (Pp 407; £49.95.) Lancaster: MTP Press Ltd, 1985.

In January 1985 the Commission of the European Communities organised a conference on multiple sclerosis research at the University of Nijmegen, and the papers presented at the meeting are published here with commendable promptitude, but without any of the discussion that was presumably the main point of the meeting. The format is somewhat unkind to both authors and reviewer. The former would be unlikely to present important unpublished work on such an occasion and are also constrained by limitations on space from fully critical treatment of their chosen topic. For example, Confavreux confirms his observations on the excellently studied series of 349 cases already reported in *Brain*, while tantalisingly stating that data from 800 patients are available. The reviewer is faced with 55 short chapters on diverse subjects: therapeutic trials, clinical classification, immunology, biochemistry, epidemiology, imaging and electrophysiology. It must suffice to say that anyone wanting a broad survey of areas in which advance knowledge is being sought or obtained would find

the book useful, although expensive. A reader with specialised knowledge of any of these fields is unlikely to find information not already available in greater detail elsewhere.

The endeavour to find common ground was, however, worthwhile and, it may be hoped, could lead for example to a better concept of the basic necessities of a controlled therapeutic trial and agreement on descriptive terms for the different modes of evolution of the disease. In the present volume a different *ad hoc* system is used in virtually every relevant chapter.

In any book produced in haste misprints are unavoidable, the only misleading example noted being on page 8, where it is stated that the presence of pyramidal and cerebellar signs five years from the onset is a good prognostic sign, the truth being the reverse.

WB MATTHEWS